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THE

WORKS

OF

THE REV. JOSEPH BELLAMY, D. D.

LATE OF BETHLEM, CONNECTICUT.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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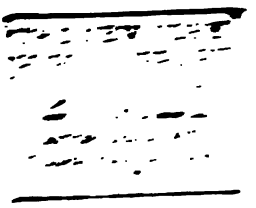

RECOMMENDATIONS.

THE character and writings of Dr. BELLAMY, have been deservedly held in *high estimation* by the Churches in New-England, and by many friends of Evangelical truth in other parts of the Christian world. His ability to illustrate the truths of the Gospel, and to trace them through all their connexions and dependencies, and to impress them on the conscience and heart, has been possessed by few.

We consider him as one of the most distinguished and useful writers of the last age. And while men are found eager rather to obtain elevated views of the Gospel and Kingdom of Christ, and the feeling of enlightened and sublime devotion, than to gratify a mere literary taste, the writings of Dr. Bellamy will never be neglected. They appear to us eminently calculated to promote the knowledge of God in the world, and to make men wise, good, and happy.

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"I HAVE read Dr. BELLAMY'S writings with great attention, profit, and pleasure; and do hereby with great satisfaction, most cheerfully recommend them to the public in general, and to Christians of every denomination in particular, as calculated to detect error and delusion, to exhibit and enforce the pure and distinguishing doctrines of the Gospel—to direct inquiring souls

—to comfort, establish, and edify experienced Christians in the truth—and to promote practical piety and godliness.

JEDEDIAH CHAPMAN,

Minister of the Gospel at Geneva, State of New-York.

Extract from a review of Dr. BELLAMY'S *"True Religion Delineated," in the London Evangelical Magazine.*

"The value of Dr. BELLAMY'S writings is already well known to the religious world: but we are obliged to the Rev. ANDREW FULLER for his history and recommendation of this work: which, we hope, will introduce it to those persons who are yet unacquainted with it. The Author's leading object is, to discriminate between the Law and the Gospel: and to define and illustrate the duties which they respectively require. We hope that the circulation of this volume will be as extensive as its contents are interesting and important; and that STUDENTS of DIVINITY *especially*, will avail themselves of the information which it contains."

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A

SERMON,

DELIVERED AT

THE FUNERAL

OF

THE REV. JOSEPH BELLAMY, D. D.

OF BETHLEM,

MARCH 9, 1790.

BY NOAH BENEDICT, A. M.
PASTOR OF THE CHURCH IN WOODBURY.

A

FUNERAL SERMON,

&c.

RESPECTABLE AUDIENCE,

I RISE to address you upon a most solemn occasion; an occasion which forces the conviction on me, that, as well the speaker, as the hearer, must die.

It was the desire of the deceased, while yet alive, that, at his funeral, a discourse might be delivered adapted to solemnize the mind, and benefit the living; but not to panegyrize the dead.

Your attention is therefore requested to that passage of inspiration, recorded in

II. TIMOTHY iv. 6.

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

THESE are the words of Paul the great apostle of the Gentiles, in which he has a special reference to himself. Though he was educated in the Pharisaic system of religion, yet, by the astonishing grace of God towards him, he was powerfully constrained to renounce that system, and to embrace the religion of the Gospel. Not only did Paul become friendly at heart to Christianity, and zealous for the faith he once destroyed, but was advanced to the office of an apostle, to which he devoted his life, and in which he spent the residue of his days. In discharging the duties of his office, he endured great persecution and hatred. That scheme of sentiments he embraced, preached, and, in a most masterly manner, defended, was opposite to the general opinion of mankind, whether Jews or Gentiles, and tended to sap their religion at the root. This gave them great disgust, and on

this account, they considered and treated him as their enemy. So that, as he himself declares, *the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, That bonds and afflictions abide me.* However, in his view, the cause he espoused was so glorious and important, tending so much to advance the honour of God, and the eternal welfare of mankind, that none of those things moved him, neither counted he his life dear unto himself: so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God.

When he wrote this epistle, he was a prisoner at Rome for the cause of Christianity; and soon expected to suffer as a martyr for the truth. Hence, as in the passage before us, he says, *Now I am ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.* In this passage, two important ideas are disclosed. One in that clause of the verse, *For I am now ready to be offered;* the other in this, *and the time of my departure is at hand.*

Some attention to each of these two ideas is designed in the following discourse.

I. I shall point out in some particulars, when the time of persons' death or departure is at hand.

II. Show what is implied in readiness for death.

Lastly. Conclude the subject with remarks and addresses suited to the present mournful occasion.

I. I shall point out, in some particulars, when the time of persons' death or departure is at hand.

1. In a comparative view, this is ever true of them while here in the world.

No sooner do we enter upon the theatre of life, than death pursues us, and whatever may be our expectations, it is but a little time before it will overtake us, and conclude the sad story of our pilgrimage on earth. To a person in youthful days, seventy or eighty years appear a long period, and could he be assured of living to that age, it would go far towards equalling his wishes. But how great is the mistake! Such it is known to be by those who have had the trial. The blooming youth may dote on old age, and think the man with an hoary head has lived till length of days has made him

weary of the world; but measure the existence of such an one with any thing durable, and it is as nothing. In the first age of the world, the life of man was near a thousand years; afterwards it was reduced to four or five hundred. In succeeding time, it was shortened to the space of between one and two hundred years. And now, at last, we can reckon only threescore years and ten. Now, compare a life of the last period with the first, and it is short indeed.

But if we still further compare it with our future, endless existence, it is but a point; it is as nothing.

Agreeably to this, it is written, *Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. For what is your life? it is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.* The days of men on the earth, are said to be as an hand-breadth, and their age as nothing before God.

2. This is more emphatically the case with persons how few soever their years, months, or days have been, if yet the greater part of them are past, and there remains but a step between them and eternity.

Observation, as well as the book of the Scriptures, teaches, that there is no age secure from death. Mankind die in infancy, and youth, and in every other period of life. No external circumstances whatever, ensure future continuance on earth. A firm constitution is no effectual bar against the arrows of death. The greatest caution in diet, labour, recreation, and sleep, affords no certainty of so much as to-morrow. Hence it is written, *Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.* A bow, shot at a venture, may wing its way with unerring aim, and hit the mark—an unexpected arrow from the Almighty's quiver, may do execution. Some fatal disease may suddenly seize them, and bring them down to the grave; or some accident may happen to put a period to their life. Men may die by the hand of violence, or more immediately by the hand of God.

Innumerable are the avenues of death; and in ways little thought of by mankind, may they be called to depart out of the world.

Persons of every age, sex, and condition, in an infinite

variety of circumstances, give up the ghost, and cease to be numbered with the living. However limited, then, the time of their existence in this world, if the greatest part of their days are finished, and they on the borders of eternity, this with propriety may be said of them, Their departure is at hand.

3. This, then, is evidently the case of those who have past the age of men, and yet are continued among the living. The departure of such is most clearly at hand. With them it is the eleventh hour of the day. They have survived the morning and meridian of life, and their sun, like that in the western sky declining behind the hills, is just ready to set. The last sand in their glass is running; the curtain of time closing; and eternity, immense, and boundless, soon, very soon, to open to their view. They feel the decays of nature, and may know their dissolution draweth nigh. But a step divides between them and the world of Spirits. Their next remove is into the unseen state.

The departure of other people may be at hand, and they not know it. They may fancy they shall live many years, and hope to rejoice in them all. But aged persons may know, both from their own observation and the word of God, that their day is over, and the night of death at hand, which will for ever separate them from all transitory things. Yet if they can say with sincerity, they are now ready to be offered, they are happy.

Though, in one view they are to be pitied, in another their situation is more to be envied, than that of any other people on this side heaven. They are to be pitied, considering the burdens and sorrows, the troubles and calamities, which attend their declining days: but otherwise their condition is blessed indeed.

They have almost finished a weary pilgrimage on earth; they have crossed the rocks and mountains, precipices and miry places which attend the journey of life, and are soon to enter upon the wished-for rest, which remains for the people of God.

The situation of such is similar to that of the mariners, who have been a voyage to a distant country, and are returning home. The voyage hath been dangerous, the sea boisterous,

and their lives eminently exposed. They have been tossed from billow to billow in jeopardy, from hidden shoals and towering waves: but finally the much desired port heaves in sight—they enter the harbour with a propitious gale, and brush the azure deep. The distance between them and the shore continually decreases; and now nothing remains but to furl the sails, drop anchor, and leap to the shore of the long, long wished-for peaceful haven.

II. Proceed we now to show what is implied in readiness for death.

And in general it implies the same, as a readiness for heaven, or the enjoyment of that glorious world.

Here I am sensible, the question will arise, wherein consists a readiness for heaven?

It is most clearly not true, that mankind, as they are in themselves, are ready to die, by being qualified for heaven. A change must therefore take place in them, whereby they specifically differ from the rest of the world, that thereby they may be ready to die, by being prepared for heaven.

1. With respect to a right and title to heaven.

That a person may enter, and take possession of an earthly inheritance, it is necessary he should have a good title. Unless his title is good, he has no right to enter and improve as his own. Neither, unless persons have a good title to heaven, are they prepared to die, being as yet disqualified for that world. But how a title to heaven is obtained, is a great question.

This is our answer.

1. Not by the merit of persons' own doings, or by their obedience to the perfect law.

For, let it be considered, they are under a law, which requires sinless perfection, on pain of eternal death. This law they have broken, and thus failed of that sinless obedience which it requires; consequently, they have fallen under its awful curse. If, therefore, they have merited any thing, it is hell, by their disobedience.

For them now to go to the law to get life, and to imagine by their own obedience to its demands, to reverse the sentence of condemnation, is folly in the extreme. As well may they think to countermand the laws of nature, and stop the sun in

its orbit, as to escape hell, and attain heaven in this way. This is to join the old Pharisees in principles, and is reprobated by the gospel of Christ. Such a system, if true, would overset the whole of Christianity. *For if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.* Let every such legalist hear those words of our apostle, and tremble, *For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse: For it is written, Cursed is every one, that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.* But,

2. A title to heaven is obtained by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ is the great medium of all friendly intercourse between heaven and earth. It is through him only, that God can extend his mercy to the guilty; and it is through faith in his name, that they may be acquitted from guilt and have a sure title to the heavenly inheritance. He is of infinite consequence in the grand affair of man's salvation. Set aside his righteousness and atonement, and our case would be hopeless and desperate.

But, glory to God in the highest, what the law could *not* do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God hath sent his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and as a sacrifice for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, *that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.* Christ hath undertaken the work of our redemption; he has come into the world, obeyed the law, and died to make atonement for sin, *that God might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.* Faith in Christ, is the required condition of an interest in the atonement, a compliance with the covenant of grace, and secures a title to heaven. All boasting is excluded, and the crown placed upon the head of the Redeemer. Look through the Gospel, and you will find that faith in the Mediator, is ever considered as the grand essential requisite to a title to heaven. It is that exercise of heart, without which we are condemned, and the wrath of God abides upon us. *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned. He that believeth is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. There*

fore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is a scheme for sinners to obtain salvation, honourable to God, and suited to their condition. Mercy and truth may meet together, righteousness and peace embrace each other; God may be glorified, the law magnified, and the sinner pardoned and saved.

This is a device worthy of a God, and merits the admiration and wonder of the whole intelligent creation.

2. They must differ from the rest of mankind by having their hearts suited to the great good there enjoyed, and so to relish the bliss and happiness of that world.

The felicity of heaven is not merely negative, but it is positive; such as is suited only to persons of a distinguished, particular, moral character. In heaven, there is not only no evil endured, but a good possessed, of invaluable worth. This good is of a peculiar nature and kind.

To settle the point then, when persons are prepared to die, by being prepared for heaven, we must consider the nature of the good there enjoyed, and so the nature of the happiness of that world.

In this world, men have different tastes, appetites, and propensities; hence, they steer their courses differently, seeking happiness in different objects. Riches are the idol of many. Worldly honour dazzles the eyes of not a few. Women and wine are in the highest estimation by multitudes. Some prefer a tavern to any home, where the juice of the grape and intoxicating liquors are plenty, and all is noise and tumult. Some are delighted with music and dancing, and some with chambering and wantonness. In various ways men seek for happiness. But, in heaven, there is neither silver nor gold; no carnal mirth, or any sinful gratifications. That is a world sacred to virtue, purity, and holiness. God is the good there enjoyed, and from thence results its chief felicity. Were the inhabitants of Paradise deprived of enjoying God, their laughter would be turned into mourning, and their joy into heaviness. Every harp would be unstrung, and all the songs of Zion cease.

But know ye, that God is infinitely holy, and therefore the good there enjoyed is of an holy nature. He declares himself to be holy. The angels pronounce him such. His moral government bears witness to that truth. The law requires holiness, and the great design of the gospel is to recover men to such a state, and so to a conformity to the moral image of God. As therefore God is the chief good of heaven, and as he is an holy God, so to be prepared to die, is to have an holy temper of heart, prepared to enjoy him, and to be happy in that enjoyment.

Without such a disposition, it is absurd to suppose that he can be enjoyed as the portion of the soul. *For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?* Destitute of such a temper, it is in the nature of things, impossible for persons to find contentment in God. To this end, they must be conformed to him in holiness. Accordingly, it is represented, as being the design of Christ, in coming into the world and laying down his life, to redeem his people from all iniquity, and purify them unto himself, a peculiar people zealous of good works.

Analogous to what hath now been said,

3. That persons may be ready to die, their minds must be formed and suited to the society, business, and employment of the heavenly world.

The beings with whom they are to associate in that world, are the elect angels, and saints made perfect in holiness. The moral character of the heavenly inhabitants, is one and the same. They are perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment. And as their moral character is the same, so it accords to that of God himself. He is an holy being; and as they are conformed to him, so they are holy. To be prepared to die, is to have a mind formed for the society of such beings. And it is also to have a taste suited to the business and employment of that world.

In that blessed region, there is room for the most vigorous exertion; every inhabitant hath business assigned him, which will demand all his attention, through the whole of his endless existence. And such will it be, as can only delight

the upright in heart. Far different will it be from the temporary concerns of the present state. The products of the earth are the medium by which life in the present state is supported; and to procure them, calls for much attention and care. But the employ of heaven consists, and will for ever, in surveying the works of God, contemplating his perfections, and celebrating his praise. From the enjoyment of him, principally results the happiness of heaven; hence, the more fully he is enjoyed, the greater will be the felicity. And as the enjoyment will be answerable to the knowledge of the object, the study of his perfections will engage the minds of its inhabitants; and while they study and investigate, they will not forget to praise. God is infinite; as therefore creatures must obtain the knowledge of him, by the manifestations he makes of himself, they will attend to his works, that they may learn his character, and increase their acquaintance with him. The great work of redemption, being that by which he hath manifested himself more clearly than in all his other works, they will contemplate it with ineffable pleasure, increase their knowledge, and heighten their happiness. And praises to God and the Lamb will be sung in such strains of rapturous joy, as surpasses all present conceptions; and a period, as boundless as eternity itself, will be allowed them in that blessed society and divine employment.

Thus I have attempted to point out and show, what is implied in preparation for death. Union to Christ by faith, and a holy temper of heart, comprises the whole. Yet, to what hath been said, I may add, that to be under circumstances to say with the Apostle, *I am now ready to be offered,* it is requisite that persons have comfortable and satisfying evidence of their title to, and meetness for, the world of glory. This is to be attained by living religion, and maintaining a course of persevering fidelity to God. To this end, they must add to faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperence, to temperance patience, and to patience godliness. They must imitate the example, not of slumbering, but of wakeful virgins, having their lamps trimmed and burning, waiting for the coming of the blessed bridegroom. They must live as strangers and pilgrims on earth; as men on a journey, travelling to a distant

country, who sit not down by the way, but keep their eye on the end of their journey, and make that the goal at which they aspire. That so when death arrests them, they may be ready to bid it welcome, and prepared to enter upon the joys of heaven which are satisfying and everlasting.

I shall now proceed to close this Discourse, with some remarks and addresses. And,

1. Hence let it be remarked, that death is the appointed lot of us all: And whether prepared or not, may be nigh at hand.

That sentence of God to Adam, *Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,* applies to all his posterity. Nothing can give us security of life; no, not for an hour. Are we in childhood, youthful life, or middle age, we know not the day of our death. If we flatter ourselves, that to-morrow shall be as this day; yet, this day, or this night, our souls may be required of us.

2. Let it be remarked, that as preparation for death hath been set before you at this time, so you are under advantages to learn whether you are the subjects of it.

And let me ask you, do you entertain hope, that your title to heaven is sure? If so, on what ground do you build your hope? On the works of the law, or on Christ Jesus, the only sure foundation? If you think on Christ, why think you so? Have you ever been made sensible of your lost perishing condition in yourselves? has the law come home on your consciences, sin revived in your view, and you made sensible, you were dead in sin? Can you call to mind the time, when he who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shone into your hearts, to give you the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ?

Have you the spirit of the Gospel? Is the law written in your hearts? Do you delight in it? And are you pleased with the gospel scheme? Do you take God's word to be your rule, and attend with persevering fidelity, upon the duties of the first and second table of the law? Is God the object of your worship, in the closet, family, and sanctuary? Are the righteous in your view, the excellent of the earth? Do you make a point of all personal and relative duties, living soberly, righteously, and godly in the world? Are you persons of

meekness, and gentleness, as the servants of Christ? *Following peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.* Do you mourn on account of remaining corruption? And forgetting the things which are behind, do you press forward toward perfection? Is religion your delight, and that which you are after *to apprehend that for which you are apprehended of Christ?* If so, these are symptoms that you are heirs of the heavenly inheritance.

3. Hence let it be remarked, that the people of God have reason to rejoice in the near view of their departure. Death will make an alteration much to their advantage. It will liberate them from all the troubles and calamities of the present state, and introduce them to the uninterrupted enjoyment of the greatest good. *Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord.* The grave is a quiet resting place for their bodies, and their souls are inconceivably happy in the presence and fruition of their God. Death to the saints, is but to bid farewell to this world, to be with Christ, join the songs, and aid the triumphs of heaven. Thenceforth they are ever before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: And the Lamb in the midst of the throne, feeds them, and leads them unto living fountains of water; and God wipes away all tears from their eyes.

4. Let it be remarked, that the preparations for death spoken of in the preceding part of this discourse, we may reasonably believe, took place in that VENERABLE PERSON, whose death we are called to lament.

Hence, in the near view of his departure, he might with propriety have assumed the language of our apostle, in the verses following our text; *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them who love his appearing.* As a minister of Christ Jesus, and as a Christian, he had fought a good fight, done the work, gone through the hardships of his spiritual warfare, and been happily instrumental of promoting the cause of the exalted Redeemer. He had kept the faith, bringing forth the fruit of the spirit in an holy life, and vindicating the doc-

trines of the gospel, in opposition to the corrupt sentiments of the day in which he lived.

Between the apostle and him, there was, in many respects, a great similarity. Paul professed Christianity, and so did he. Paul was a minister of Christ, and so was he. Paul spent his life in the gospel ministry, and so did he.

Besides his stated labours at home, he rode and preached abundantly abroad. In this, as well as by his writings, in defence of the gospel, to which we might add, his instructing of candidates for the evangelical ministry, he was a rich blessing to the church of Christ in New-England, and to the Christian Church in general.

It pleased God, in the early part of his life, to call him by his grace, and reveal his Son in him, that he might preach to mankind the unsearchable riches of Christ. The power of religion which he experienced in his own soul, sweetly constrained him to devote his life to that glorious work. When but young, he applied himself with assiduity, to the study of divinity, in which he made so laudable proficiency, that he soon became qualified for the work, which ever after was the delight of his heart. His taste for divine things, excited him to search with indefatigable industry after knowledge, that he might become more thoroughly acquainted with the things which appertain to the kingdom of God. Application, aided by eminent natural abilities, rendered him one of the most able divines, and brightest luminaries, in this our western world.

A superficial knowledge of things did little satisfy his great contemplative mind. He searched for knowledge, as for silver, and took peculiar pleasure in finding out not only what was true, but why it was so.

In a variety of respects, he shone with distinguished lustre. Extensive science, ease of communicating his ideas, rendered him one of the best instructors. He was not unacquainted with persons and things, as he perused every author which came to his hands. This enabled him to converse with propriety and to edification on almost every subject.

In councils, he was much improved; for with singular facility, could he look into cases of difficulty, and investigate ways and means for a just and amicable settlement.

His benevolent feelings, were not confined to a narrow circle, but were as extensive as the globe. Sion lay near his heart; her ruins he lamented, and her prosperity filled him with exceeding joy. Oh! what marks of anguish have I seen in him, when surveying the state of the world lying in wickedness; God dishonoured, his law contemned, his grace despised, and mankind involving themselves in irretrievable ruin. These reflections almost overwhelmed his pious soul, and destroyed his comfort. He had but one refuge, which was God. His providence he believed to be universal, and that good would result from all the evil which took place, by the agency of him who made all things for himself, and is engaged to secure his own glory.

His acquaintance, as well with the political, as moral state of the world, was general, and especially of his native country; and like the men of Issachar, understood the times, to know what Israel ought to do. However, divinity was his favourite study, and gained his chief attention.

As a preacher he had, perhaps, no superior, and very few equals. His voice was manly, his manner engaging. Even those who were unfriendly to his religious sentiments, were pleased to hear him preach. His voice was music to their ears; his method inviting. In the desk he appeared to understand human nature to perfection, and knew how to address himself to his auditory, so as seldom to fail of gaining universal attention. He was master of his subject when he spake, and had a singular faculty of adapting himself to the meanest capacity. As his field was boundless, he gave scope to his penetrating genius, and favoured his hearers with a rich variety. No subject escaped his notice, or that was not at proper times, held up to the view of his people. By this means, their advantages were great to make swift progress in knowledge, and become a people of much understanding. Yet, the more important things of religion were chiefly dwelt upon by him in his public performances. His primary aim was to promote the glory of God, and the good of immortal souls. You well know, that his talent was surprising at painting divine truth in the most lively colours, and making invisible things appear near and real. The passions of his

auditory were at his command, and he well knew how to instruct the understanding, and touch the heart.

When the law was his theme, Mount Sinai was all in a smoke; the thunder and the lightning issued from his lips, and all was solemn as the grave. On the contrary, in the most melting strains, would he describe the sufferings of Christ, his matchless love for sinners, and, in persuasive eloquence, invite them to be reconciled to God. With what amazing terror, would he represent the torments of the damned! And in what lively pictures, lay open the glories of heaven, and paint the joys of the paradise of God! He was truly a workman who needed not to be ashamed.

But after all, it was the will of heaven that he should share the common lot of mankind, and cease to be a sojourner on earth. Death, inexorable death, hath ended his long and useful life; it hath removed him far away from all transitory things.

In his last illness, when he most possessed himself, he appeared to enjoy great serenity of mind, and to look forward with pleasing, nay, almost impatient expectation, of the glory that should be revealed. His mind was much engaged in the contemplation of the perfections and government of God, and of the issue to which things would be brought under the direction of the wise Governor of the world. He was satisfied as to the truth of the religion he had professed, and derived great comfort from the evidence he had of his experimental acquaintance therewith. He anticipated the joys of heaven; he longed to be there. The manner of his dying was not such, as, had it been left to his choice, would have been most agreeable to him, having repeatedly said, he could wish to drop dead in his pulpit, at the close of public exercise. But it was not the pleasure of God to gratify him herein. He was continued upon the threshold of eternity for more than three years. Though it was contrary to his expectation, to be thus long suspended between the earth and heaven, he acquiesced in the wisdom of Providence. The welcome messenger hath at length arrived, put a period to his troubles, and crowned his wishes.

Behold, there lies the remains of that eminent servant of

God, wrapped in a winding-sheet, and dressed for the grave! Mourn, ye inhabitants of Bethlem! let the town of Woodbury join in the lamentation! Let the neighbouring hills echo the sound, and the waves of the sea roll the tide of grief to distant regions. Let the Church of God in every realm take a sympathetic part, and bewail her loss. O Zion, one of thy strong pillars is removed; one of thy gapmen is no more!

But not to pursue these reflections, I shall proceed to some addresses, and so close the subject. And,

1. This solemn occasion dictates the propriety of saying a few words to her whom God hath bereaved of the nearest friend in life.

Much respected Madam,

Divine Providence hath realized to you, the truth of man's mortality, by removing your affectionate husband from your embraces. This is not the first nor the second time, in which lover and friend have been removed far from you and your acquaintance, into darkness*. We desire to sympathize with you in your affliction, and to bear a part with you in your sorrow. In the death of the deceased, you have lost a compassionate husband, a faithful friend, an able guide, whom, had heaven seen fit to spare, and spare in health, might have been a rich blessing to you. His tender regard for you was conspicuous, and to render you happy was an object of his attention and care. The footsteps of divine providence in his removal, seem somewhat mysterious. Why is it, that he should become helpless so soon after you had formed those connexions which, by his death, are dissolved? Why, when you had so newly began in matrimonial endearments, to taste the sweets of domestic happiness; and when you had a prospect of living some years in a family state, must he be seized with that fatal disease, which put a period to his life? God's way is sometimes in the sea, his path in the mighty waters, and his designs unfathomable. Yet, from

* She had before lost two husbands, the Rev. Mr. Leavitt, of Somers, and the Rev. Mr. Storrs, of Northbury.

the perfections of his nature, we are bound to believe, that justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne.

It must afford you sensible satisfaction, that you discharged the duties of your relation to him with fidelity; as you have neglected nothing to lengthen out a life so valuable and dear. But his day was come to fall; the unchanged decree of heaven must bring forth. His death is the result of unerring wisdom, and perfect moral rectitude. Therefore, instead of finding fault with God's administrations, hush every rising murmur, quietly acquiesce. Eye with attention the hand which smites you; patiently submit to the rod by which you were chastised. Then shall meat come out of the eater, and sweetness out of the strong; your afflictions shall be your blessings. We wish you the light of God's countenance, the support of his gracious spirit. He is able to comfort you in all your tribulations. He can administer abundant consolation. You have lost but a stream, God is a fountain. In him all fulness dwells. To him we invite you to look, and under the shadow of his wings to seek refuge. May this afflictive providence be sanctified to you; may it be the happy means of preparing you to follow your departed consort into the world of spirits; that you may be happy with him in the enjoyment of God for ever. This, dear Madam, is our ardent wish, and with this, we must close our address to you.

2. The children of the deceased, next claim our attention.

Afflicted Friends,

Considering the heavy loss you sustain, and the keen sensibility it must occasion, I feel myself at a loss, in what language to address you. The near relation which subsisted between the deceased and you, together with the paternal tenderness he exercised toward you, must necessarily cause his death to be greatly lamented. By his removal, you have experienced the loss of a father, nay, more than a father, a kind parent and a faithful minister. Should I dwell upon the dark side of this dispensation, it would but open the springs of grief; it would but enlarge the tide of sorrow. I wish not to give you pain, but rather administer comfort, to your sorrowful

hearts. Though your dear parent is gone, never more to be an inhabitant of this our world, you have this source of consolation, that his death is his eternal gain. He has exchanged worlds infinitely to his advantage. Methinks there was a crowd of angels who surrounded his dying bed, commissioned from the court above, to take the charge of his departing spirit, and see it safely lodged in the embraces of his Redeemer. Charity forbids us to place him, but in the bosom of Abraham, surrounded with kindred spirits, solacing himself at the fountain head of delight, and drinking full draughts of the river of pleasure, which flow at God's right hand. He died but to live, and to live in a more happifying and exalted manner, than when here on the earth. You have no reason to lament his death, as a loss to himself; for while for him to live was Christ, so for him to die, was gain.

The calamity is yours, and great indeed is it, in every view. While you feel the pain, forget not the hand which caused it; but remember that submission is your duty. Let God be your refuge, and his name your strong tower. In this day of adversity, repair to him for protection. Let it be your chief care, to have a sanctified improvement of this providence. Then may you say, it is good for you that you have been afflicted. You will never more be blessed with the private counsels or public instructions of your father. Remember the past; let them enter into your hearts, copy them in your lives, and you will be wise for yourselves. We commend you to God, who is able to sanctify this dispensation, and over-rule it to your everlasting good.

3. Let me in the next place, address myself to the bereaved church of Christ, and congregation in this place.

Men, Brethren, and Fathers,

You have occasion to sing of mercy and of judgment. Of mercy, in sparing the life of your worthy Pastor for so many years to you; of judgment, in that he is called away, leaving you as sheep without a shepherd. Your loss, it is probable, is in some respects irreparable. It is scarce to be expected, that you will ever be blessed with another so able, faithful,

skilful instructor. I have in time past viewed you as one of the most privileged people on this side heaven. O, what a price have you had in your hands to get wisdom! what a blessed chance for a glorious immortality! But, alas! the labours of your Minister are over with you. He has done his work, and is called home to receive his reward. Your eyes will see him no more; his voice will no more be heard among you. He will no more set before you the character of Jehovah, and delineate his glorious perfections. He will no more bring into your view your natural depravity, or your ill desert for sin: No more unfold the riches of God's grace in the gift of his Son, display the banner of his cross, and invite you to take shelter there: No more explain the god-like, glorious doctrines of grace contained in the gospel; point out the necessity of regeneration, and saving conversion, and show wherein they consist: No more vindicate the doctrine of imputed righteousness against gainsayers; or urge the importance of true holiness, exhorting you to follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. He will no more reprove the vicious, detect the hypocrite, or perform any branch of the ministerial office. You, who are heads of families, will no more hear the solemn counsels of his mouth, and his pathetic entreaties, to take care of your own souls, as well as those of your children. You, who are young, will no more be called upon by him, to remember your Creator in the days of your youth, to forsake the foolish and live, and go in the way of understanding. He has bid a final adieu to this desk, to this house, to this people of his charge. He will never give you another warning to flee from impending danger, nor another invitation, to hasten to the mountain of safety. Lo, his tongue cleaves to the roof of his mouth, and his lips are sealed in death. Never forget his past labours among you; his prayers and tears, his cries and entreaties, with and for you. Be humble under the mighty hand of God. Consider the ground of this sore bereavement. Reflect upon the improvement you have made under the ministry of this eminent teacher, whose labours you so long enjoyed. Take the warning gvien you by the providence, and be quickened thereby

to prepare for your own departure. May a merciful God, who hath broken, heal you, and he who hath wounded, bind you up. Brethren, we commend you to God, and the power of his grace, who is able to build you up, and finally give you an inheritance among them which are sanctified through faith in the Redeemer.

4. I am naturally led, on this occasion, to address myself in a few words, to my fathers and brethren in the work of the ministry.

Reverend Sirs,

Not only one of our fellow-mortals is called away by death, but also a fellow-labourer in the vineyard of God. Not only a man, a Christian, but an eminent minister of the Gospel. He was intrusted with a like office as we; he was engaged in the same cause with us. But neither his office, nor his eminence, could secure him from the stroke of death. May we not justly lament over this man of God in the expressive language of Elisha, as he saw the prophet Elijah ascending from earth to heaven—*My Father, my Father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.* Well may we cry out, *Our fathers, where are they; and the prophets, do they live for ever?* Hereby are we solemnly admonished that we must die. How doth it become us to shake off sloth, and be active in our Master's work! We are intrusted not only with the care of our own souls, but also the souls of our people. Let us awake to the greatest of all concerns—the salvation of men. It should be our care to follow the example of Christ, that we may be patterns to our flocks in virtue and true piety. How ought love to God and benevolence to men to excite us to discharge the duties of our office with fidelity! Let us keep future realities much in view, and with an eye to the day when we must give an account of our stewardship, let us pray for our flocks, warn sinners of impending destruction, and exert ourselves as under-shepherds, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Let us pursue them to the gates of death with our entreaties and admonitions. Let us cry aloud, and not spare, lift up our voices like trumpets, and show sinners their

transgressions and sins. Knowing the terrors of the Lord, let us persuade men to be reconciled to God. With bowels of compassion and tenderness, let us feed the sheep and lambs of Christ's flock with the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby. Let us take heed to ourselves and to our doctrine, and continue in them; for in so doing, we shall both save ourselves and those that hear us. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, we shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

To conclude. Let one and all lay it to heart, that they must die; and now in this their day, attend to the things which belong to their peace, lest they be hid from their eyes. AMEN.

APPENDIX.

THE principal design of publishing memoirs of men eminent in knowledge and piety, is the benefit of survivors through the influence of example. With this view, the following sketches are presented to the reader.

The editor enters on the work with diffidence; but he owes it to the memory of his venerable friend, to such as shall read his theological writings, and to the Churches of Christ.

The summary of Dr. Bellamy's character as a Christian and Minister, in the preceding discourse, was all that was necessary, or, perhaps, proper, on that solemn occasion. To those who were personally, and many of them intimately acquainted, it was sufficient. The following particulars are subjoined for the information of strangers.

The Reverend Dr. JOSEPH BELLAMY, was born at New-Cheshire, in the county of New-Haven, of reputable parents, in the year 1719. His early days were devoted to literature; and at the age of sixteen years, he was graduated at Yale-College, in New-Haven. The course of his academical studies being finished, he retired from the university. And, from his private writings*, which were begun about this time, it appears that it was not long, after his removal from New-Haven, before he became the subject of those serious impressions, which we have abundant reason to believe, issued in a saving conversion.

From this period he consecrated his talents and studies to the evangelical ministry. At about the age of eighteen, he passed the usual examination before the Association of New-Haven county, and received their recommendation as a can-

* Among the Doctor's papers is found a journal, containing an account of his life, religious exercises, &c. which he had kept, a number of years, for the assistance of serious reflection in his own breast. Extracts from these private writings, together with the publications of several tracts of his, on important subjects, might better illustrate the character above attempted, but cannot have room in this Appendix.

didate for the gospel ministry. He preached in several congregations to good acceptance, and with hopeful success. But a distinguishing blessing attended his ministry, to the people of Bethlem, in the town of Woodbury. A large proportion of this infant society appeared to be awakened to a becoming sense of religion. The congregation, though small, could by no means be reconciled to part with the man, by whose ministry so many of them thought they had been conducted to a saving knowledge of the truth. After much deliberation, prayer, and consultation with his fathers in the ministry, he determined to accept their call; and was accordingly ordained to the gospel ministry, and the pastoral office over the church in Bethlem, in the spring of 1740. In this retirement from the world, he devoted himself, with uncommon ardour, to his studies, and the duties of his office among his people, till the memorable revival of religion in New-England, and other parts of America, as well as Europe, which began in 1740, and was most conspicuous in 1742.—From that time he could not be contented to tarry at home. The spirit of ardent piety, which had marked his path for several years, kindled on this occasion into a flame. Seeing the fields white unto harvest, he thought he had a divine call to more extensive labours. Taking care that his own pulpit should be vacant as little as possible, he devoted a considerable portion of his time, for several years, to itinerating, in different parts of Connecticut and the neighbouring Colonies—preaching the gospel daily, and, often, repeatedly in a day—multitudes flocking to hear the word, and crowding to his lodgings for private instructions. Such appearances were exceedingly common in that happy season of the plentiful effusions of divine grace. And the many faithful labourers who, like the Doctor, were engaged in that most delightful service, found the work growing on their hands, and had the most animating prospect of success.

During the continuance of this extraordinary attention to religion in the land, Dr. Bellamy persevered in unremitted labours, desirous, as far as possible, to "preach the gospel to every creature." And, as far as man could judge, he was instrumental of the saving conversion of many, and of build-

ing them up in the most holy faith. It is, however, to be acknowledged, with deep humiliation, that the latter part of that wonderful season was by no means equal to the expectations of its pious friends. In the early stages of the work, it seemed to be happily free from impure mixtures. And many pious ministers were ready to believe that the latter day glory of the church was dawning. But towards the conclusion of those religious operations, the prospect began sensibly to decline. Satan, who had in vain attempted to put a stop to this good work by open opposition, at length transformed himself into an angel of light. This produced a flood of enthusiasm and false religion, under various names. Many ignorant and vain pretenders to uncommon attainments in religion, set up for public teachers; divisions and separations were multiplied; the religious awakening declined fast; the enemy triumphed; and the friends of Zion mourned.

The prospect of any considerable usefulness, from itinerating, being now clouded, Mr. Bellamy, as well as others, returned to a more constant attention to his own charge. At this time he entered on the important task of writing his piece, entitled, *True Religion delineated.*—Though but a youth at this time, he seems to have been peculiarly qualified for a work of this kind: Not only from his distinguished abilities, ardent piety, great diligence in treasuring up theological knowledge, and an intimate acquaintance with some of the most eminent Divines then in New-England, especially the Reverend Jonathan Edwards, whose praise is still in our churches; but also from the uncommon attention which he had given to the marks of distinction between true and false religion, in judging of his own sincerity, from the first of his religious impressions; and from his very extensive acquaintance with persons under all kinds of religious operations, during the remarkable out-pourings of GOD's Spirit, referred to above. This book was printed about the year 1750, was well received, and has lately been re-printed in Scotland.

From this period, his abilities, as a divine, became more conspicuous: and young gentlemen, who were preparing for the gospel ministry, applied to him as a teacher. He conti-

nued to be eminently useful, in this branch of his work, till the decline of life induced him to relinquish it.

As his method of instruction has met the approbation of those to whom it was known, and may probably be beneficial to others, the following summary is inserted.

After some conference, on religious subjects, with those who applied to him for instruction, by which he might learn their abilities, and cast of mind, he commonly gave them a number of questions, on the leading and most essential subjects of religion, both natural and revealed, in the form of a system. This system of questions began with that which is the foundation of all true religion—the existence, unity, natural and moral attributes of GOD; and proceeded to the grounds, nature, extent, and perfection of his providential and moral government of the world; the qualities essentially requisite to constitute a moral agent, or accountable creature; the evidences that man is such a being; the moral law or law of nature, with respect to man—the reasons of the law, or of man's duty; the primary state of man; the present character and state of man; evidences from reason, of a future state of rewards and punishments; evidences from reason of the perpetuity of that state—whether, antecedent to supernatural revelation, there be any hope of pardon and divine favour to sinful man; the need of a supernatural revelation; grounds to hope for it; evidences that the Old and New Testaments contain such a revelation; the divine Trinity in unity; original sin; divine decree; divinity of Christ; his humanity, mediatorial office and work; nature and design of his atonement; nature, necessity, author and effects of regeneration; justifying faith; justification by faith, as distinguished from good works; the distinguishing nature and fruits of true repentance, love, and other christian graces,—or the scriptural marks of a saving change; perseverance of saints; separate state; resurrection; future judgment; perpetual happiness of the righteous, and misery of the wicked; christian church; particular churches; officers, what, and how qualified; sacraments; nature and use of church discipline.

With a system of questions, similar to this, before his pupils, he directed their reading to such books on those leading

topics, as treat them with the greatest perspicuity and force of argument; and usually spent his evenings in examining into their improvements, solving difficulties which they found, or proposing and solving others, till they had obtained a good degree of understanding in a general system. After which, he directed them to write on each of the questions before given them, reviewing those parts of the authors which treated on that subject. These dissertations of his pupils were submitted to his examination. He pointed out where their arguments were insufficient, and substituted others more suitable in their place; stated such objections as are to be found in the writings of the most able and learned opposers of the truth; and when his pupils were unable to answer them, he pointed out the mode of solution. As they advanced in ability to make proper distinctions, he led them to read the most learned and acute opposers of the truth, on the deistical, trinitarian, and other leading subjects of controversy; and laid open to them the fallacy of the most specious reasonings in those writers.

When his pupils, by reading, conversation, and writing, in the form of dissertations, had gone through with a system of theological questions, he led them to write on several of the most important points, systematically, in the form of sermons. Next to this, he led them to peruse the best experimental and practical discourses, and to compose sermons on like subjects. This course he pursued with them, revising and correcting their compositions, and inculcating the great importance of acquiring the best method of preaching the gospel, and of performing all branches of the ministerial work. And also the necessity, for this end, of a heart truly devoted to the service of Christ, and a life of watching and prayer; discoursing occasionally on the various duties, trials, comforts, and motives of the evangelical work; that his pupils might be, as far as possible, "scribes well instructed to the kingdom of God." We add nothing further on this head. The above hints will give the reader a general view of what was designed. But those only, who have enjoyed his instructions, can have just apprehensions of his peculiar talents, as a theological teacher; or of the diligence and ardour with which *he employed them.*

His doctrinal sentiments, on many of the most important principles, may be learned from his printed works. His principal publications are the following:

1. Early piety recommended. A sermon from Ecclesiastes xii. 1.

2. True Religion delineated. (Already mentioned.)

3. Sermons on the Divinity of Christ. The Millennium, and the Wisdom of GOD, in the permission of Sin.

4. Dialogues, on Theron and Aspasio. By Paulinus.

5. Essay on the Gospel.

6. The great Evil of Sin. A sermon.

7. The Law, a Schoolmaster. A sermon.

Besides these, he published several small pieces on creeds and confessions; on the Covenant of Grace; and on church Covenanting. Also, some small pieces, in answer to objections published against some of his other works.

He was a Protestant and a Calvinist. He taught the truths contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, and other approved creeds and confessions. But called no man father; and endeavoured to build all his opinions on the word of GOD.

As a pastor, he was diligent in the discharge of his duty, taking heed to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made him an overseer. He taught his people publicly and from house to house. He was especially attentive to the rising generation, and spent much time in teaching and warning the children and youth. Besides his stated labours on the Lord's-day, he frequently spent an hour, in the intervals of public worship, in catechising the children of the congregation. He was a skilful guide to inquiring souls; and was ever ready to instruct his people and others, who applied to him in private, in the great concern of man, and in all cases of conscience. He had an excellent talent at composing differences, and preventing or healing breaches in churches, and was much employed in such cases. And his name will long be had in honourable remembrance by our ministers and churches; especially in the consociation of Litchfield county, to which he belonged.

His heart was eminently formed for christian friendship: Among his intimates and tried friends he was open and free—ever careful to spend the interviews of friendship on subjects useful and important. His company was much sought, it was enjoyed with pleasure, and his friends rarely parted from him without sensible improvement, unless they were wanting to themselves.

He possessed a sufficient degree of natural fortitude; was a firm and decided defender of what he believed to be divine truth; but was a friend to the persons of those whose errors he opposed.

His writings procured him the esteem of the pious and learned at home and abroad. They have been read and several of them re-printed in Great-Britain. As a mark of this esteem, he, in the year 1768, received his Doctorate in Divinity, from the University of Aberdeen.

During the active part of life, he maintained an extensive epistolary correspondence, by which he was beneficial to many, and obtained much useful knowledge to himself. By means of his correspondence in Britain, and especially by his worthy and constant friend, the Reverend Dr. John Erskine, of Edinburgh, he annually received regular accounts of whatever materially affected the state of religion and the interest of the churches in England, Scotland, and other parts of Europe. It has already been mentioned that, in the early part of his ministry, he contracted an acquaintance with the late President Edwards; this produced an intimate friendship, which continued till the President's much lamented death, and which must be abundantly improved now they are happily re-united: To this early acquaintance and friendship with that eminent Divine, must be attributed, in part, the Doctor's improvement in theological learning, and his usefulness in the churches.

The reader may perhaps wish to see the Doctor in a more private walk. The leading indications of his countenance were dignity and firmness. He was tall, and, in his youth, slender and of a thin habit; in middle life, well proportioned; in old age, his aspect and mein were commanding and venerable. About the year 1744, he married Miss Frances

Sherman, of New-Haven, a lady possessed of many amiable accomplishments and eminent piety. By her he had seven children, five of which survive their parents: two are no more on earth*.

From nature, education, and piety, Mrs. Bellamy was qualified to fill her station with uncommon usefulness.—Among other important branches of her character, it is worthy of remark, that, during the course of many years, and till the decline of health prevented, she sustained almost the whole weight of family care with a cheerful readiness; that her husband might be interrupted as little as possible in his studies and other duties of his office. In her domestic relations she was a great blessing; she was the joy of her husband and children. She merited and possessed the affections of the congregation and the numerous visitors who entered her hospitable door. Faithful to her family, to her friends, to the poor, to the Church of GOD, and, above all, faithful to her GOD; she finished the labours of mortality on the 30th of August, 1785, in the year of her age 62.

Doctor Bellamy was one of those who did what their "hand findeth to do, with their might." In his study and pulpit, his exertions were ardent and persevering. It was, therefore, to be expected that he should spend fast; and that in declining life, the decays of age should be rapid. This was observed to be case by his friends with a painful sensibility, in some of his last years of active service; and was ac-

* Of the two children who died before their father, the first was his second son *Jonathan*, who finished his academical education, and graduated in Yale College, in 1772. And having pursued the study of the law under an able teacher, and passed the accustomed examination, was admitted to the bar as a practising attorney. Soon after which, the commencement of hostilities between Great-Britain and America, induced him to take an active part. And at the close of the campaign of 1776, just as he was returning to the ardent wishes and prayers of his parents and friends, he was seized with the small-pox, and died at Oxford, Essex county, in the State of New-Jersey, on the 4th of January, 1777, in the 24th year of his age.

The other child who did not survive her father, was *Rebecca*, his second daughter. She was married in her youth to the Rev. Mr. Hart, of Preston, and died in her 42d year, December 24, 1788. Sketches of the life and character of this amiable and pious lady may be seen at the end of the sermon published on occasion of her death.

celerated by the loss of the wife of his youth, and joy of his heart.

However, the year following her death, he contracted a second marriage with Mrs. Storrs, relict of the late Rev. Andrew Storrs, of Watertown, in Connecticut. But the prospect of a serene old age was blasted soon after their marriage, by his being seized with a paralytic shock. This happened on the 19th of November, 1786. It wholly deprived him of the use of his limbs on the left side, and greatly impaired his intellectual powers. Able physicians were consulted, and their means applied, but without success. He continued more than three years in this state of deep calamity, with little variation of his disorder; excepting that he had some lucid intervals, in which he appeared to be himself for a short space. In these seasons, he discoursed to those about him on the great things of the Gospel; the dispensations of infinite wisdom in regard to the church and himself, and his joyful hope of approaching glory, to the great satisfaction of his Christian friends, and as might be expected from his former life and ministry. But these intervals of reason became shorter and less frequent in the later stages of his complaint. About three weeks before his death, he appeared to be afflicted with a cold and oppression of the lungs, which produced an ulceration. And after a painful struggle, he received his dismission from sin and sorrow, at 8 o'clock, in the evening of Saturday, March 6th, 1790, in the 72d year of his age, and 50th of his ministry. And, we doubt not, received a welcome to that blessed society, where the imperfections and sorrows of mortality shall never come.

His funeral was attended, the Tuesday following, by the clergy of the vicinity, his own congregation, and a numerous concourse of respectable and worthy friends from the neighbouring towns, who did him honour at his death, and mingled their sorrows with those of his family and particular connexions, in a manner which expressed the common sentiment, that a great man was fallen in our Israel. And, after the preceding discourse, and the connected solemnities in the house of God, his remains were deposited in the house of silence with every mark of respect and solemnity.

The removal of such eminent lights from our world, draws a dark veil over the church on earth! Who shall be found to fill the vacant candlestick, and guide the bereaved flock in the path of life? Who shall instruct our young men who are designed for the sacred ministry? and be instrumental in forming them for usefulness in our churches? Who shall preside in our ecclesiastical councils, and preserve the peace and order of the churches? Who—but no man. Let every anxious thought be silent. The chief Shepherd and Bishop lives, and shall for ever live. He walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. All the churches are his care. He holds the stars in his right hand. The residue of the spirit is with him. And he hath graciously assured us that the walls of Jerusalem are ever before him; and that the gates of hell shall never prevail. May the falling mantle of our ascended prophet, rest on some favoured Elisha; and the Lord of the harvest send forth labourers who shall be still more eminent and more useful than those who are removed. May their success be still greater. And may our churches be blest with a succession of well-qualified pastors; and flourish in all the branches of Christian piety and virtue, till the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

TRUE RELIGION DELINEATED;

OR,

Experimental Religion,

AS DISTINGUISHED FROM FORMALITY ON THE ONE HAND, AND ENTHUSIASM ON THE OTHER,

SET IN A SCRIPTURAL AND RATIONAL LIGHT.

IN TWO DISCOURSES:

IN WHICH SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL ERRORS, BOTH OF THE ARMINIANS AND ANTINOMIANS, ARE CONFUTED—THE FOUNDATION AND SUPERSTRUCTURE OF THEIR DIFFERENT SCHEMES DEMOLISHED—AND THE TRUTH, AS IT IS IN JESUS, EXPLAINED AND PROVED.

The whole adapted to the weakest capacities, and designed for the establishment, comfort, and quickening of the people of GOD.

BY JOSEPH BELLAMY, D. D.
Late of Bethlem, Connecticut.

WITH A PREFACE BY THE REV. MR. EDWARDS.

Isaiah xxx. 21. "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left."

Matthew vii. 13, 14. "Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

PREFACE.

THE being of GOD is reckoned the first, greatest, and most fundamental of all things that are the objects of knowledge or belief; and, next to that, must be reckoned the nature of that religion which God requires of us, and must be found in us, in order to our enjoying the benefits of his favour: or rather, this may be esteemed of like importance with the other; for it in like manner concerns us to know how we may honour and please God, and be accepted of him, as it concerns us to know that he has a being. This is a point of infinite consequence to every single person; each one having to do with God as his supreme judge, who will fix his eternal state according as he finds him to be *with* or *without* true religion. And this is also a point that vastly concerns the public interests of the Church of God.

It is very apparent, that the want of a thorough distinction in this matter, through the defect either of sufficient discernment or care, has been the chief thing that has obscured, obstructed, and brought to a stand, all remarkable revivals of religion which have been since the beginning of the reformation; the very chief reason why the most hopeful and promising beginnings have never come to any more than beginnings; being nipped in the bud, and soon followed with a great increase of stupidity, corrupt principles, a profane and atheistical spirit, and the triumph of the open enemies of religion. And from hence, and from what has been so evident, from time to time, in these latter ages of the church, and from the small acquaintance I have with the history of preceding times, I cannot but think, that if the events which have appeared from age to age, should be carefully examined and considered, it would appear that it has been thus in all ages of the Christian Church from the beginning.

They, therefore, who bring any addition of light to this great subject, *The nature of true religion, and its distinction from all counterfeits,* should be accepted as doing the greatest

possible service to the Church of God. And attempts to this end ought not to be despised and discouraged, under a notion that it is but vanity and arrogance in such as are lately sprung up in an obscure part of the world, to pretend to add any thing on this subject, to the informations we have long since received from their fathers, who have lived in former times, in NEW-ENGLAND, and more noted countries. We cannot suppose that the Church of God is already possessed of all that light, in things of this nature, that ever God intends to give it; nor that all *Satan*'s lurking-places have already been found out. And must we let that grand adversary alone in his devices, to ensnare and ruin the souls of men, and confound the interest of religion amongst us, without attempting to know any thing further of his wiles than others have told us, though we see every day the most fatal effects of his hitherto unobserved snares, for fear we shall be guilty of vanity or want of modesty, in attempting to discern any thing that was not fully observed by our betters in former times; and that whatever peculiar opportunities God gives us, by special dispensations of his providence, to see some things that were overlooked by them?

The remarkable things that have come to pass in late times respecting the state of religion, I think, will give every wise observer great reason to determine that the counterfeits of the grace of God's spirit are many more than have been generally taken notice of heretofore; and that, therefore, we stand in great need of having the certain and distinguishing nature and marks of genuine religion more clearly and distinctly set forth than has been usual; so that the difference between that and every thing that is spurious may be more plainly and surely discerned, and safely determined.

As inquiries of this nature are very important and necessary in themselves, so they are what the present state of religion in NEW-ENGLAND, and other parts of the *British dominions*, do in a peculiar manner render necessary at this season; and also do give peculiar opportunity for discoveries beyond what has been for a long time. Satan, transforming himself into an angel of light, has shown himself in many of his artifices more plainly than ordinary; and given us opportunity to see more

clearly and exactly the difference between his operations, and the saving operations and fruits of the spirit of Christ; and we should be much to blame, if we did not improve such an advantage.

The author of the ensuing treatise has not been negligent of these opportunities. He has not been an unwary or undiscerning observer of events that have occurred these ten years past. From the intimate acquaintance with him, which I have been favoured with for many years, I have abundant reason to be satisfied that what has governed him in this publication, is no vanity of mind, no affection to appear in the world as an author, nor any desire of applause; but a hearty concern for the glory of GOD, and the kingdom and interest of his Lord and Master JESUS CHRIST; and that as to the main things he here insists on, as belonging to the distinguishing nature and essence of true religion, he declares them not only as being satisfied of them, from a careful consideration of important facts, (which he has had great opportunity to observe,) and very clear experience in his own soul; but the most diligent search of the holy scriptures, and strict examination of the nature of things; and that his determinations concerning the nature of genuine religion, here exhibited to the world, have not been settled and published by him without long consideration, and maturely weighing all objections which could be thought of, taking all opportunities to hear what could be said by all sorts of persons against the principles here laid down, from time to time conversing freely and friendly with gentlemen in the *Arminian* scheme, having also had much acquaintance, and frequently and long conversation with many of the people called *Separatists*, their preachers, and others.

And I cannot but express my sincere wishes, that what is here written by this reverend and pious author may be taken notice of, read without prejudice, and thoroughly considered: As I verily believe, from my own perusal, it will be found a discourse wherein the proper essence and distinguishing nature of saving religion is deduced from the first principles of the oracles of God in a manner tending to a great increase of light in this infinitely important subject—discovering truth.

and, at the same time, showing the grounds of it, or showing what things are true, and also why they are true—manifesting the mutual dependance of the various parts of the true scheme of religion, and also the foundation of the whole—things being reduced to their first principles in such a manner, that the connexion and reason of things, as well as their agreement with the word of God, may be easily seen; and the true source of the dangerous errors concerning the terms of God's favour and qualifications for heaven, which are prevailing at this day, is plainly discovered; showing their falsehood at the very foundation, and their inconsistence with the very first principles of the religion of the bible.

Such a discourse as this is very seasonable at this day: and although the author (as he declares,) has aimed especially at the benefit of persons of vulgar capacity; and so has not laboured for such ornaments of style and language as might best suit the taste of men of polite literature; yet the matter or substance that is to be found in this discourse, is what, I trust, will be very entertaining and profitable to every serious and impartial reader, whether learned or unlearned.

JONATHAN EDWARDS.

Northampton, August 4, 1750.

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

WE are designed, by GOD our Maker, for an endless existence. In this present life we just enter upon being, and are in a state introductory to a never-ending duration in another world, where we are to be for ever unspeakably happy or miserable, according to our present conduct. *This* is designed for a state of *probation*; and *that*, for a state of *rewards* and *punishments*. We are now upon trial, and God's eye is upon us every moment; and that picture of ourselves, which we exhibit in our conduct, the whole of it taken together, will give our proper character, and determine our state for ever. This being designed for a state of trial, God now means to try us, that our conduct, under all the trials of life, may discover what we are, and ripen us for the day of judgment; when God will judge every man according to his works, and render to every one according to his doings. He does not intend, in the dispensations of his providence, to suit things to a state of ease and enjoyment, which is what this life is not designed for; but to a state of trial: He puts men into trying circumstances of set purpose, and, as it were, contrives methods to try them. One great end he has in view, is, that he may prove them, and know what is in their hearts.

He did not lead the *children of Israel* directly from *Egypt* to *Canaan*, but first through the *Red Sea*, and then out into a wilderness, where there was neither water, nor bread, nor flesh; and made them wander there forty years, that he might *try them, and prove them, and know what was in their hearts*—Deut. viii. 2. So when the *christian religion* was introduced into the world, it was not in such a way as men would have chosen, but in a manner suited to a state of trial. The SON OF GOD did not come in outward glory, but in the form of a servant; not to reign as an earthly prince, but to die upon the cross: and his apostles made but a mean appearance in the eyes of the world; and that *sect* was every where

spoken against, and persecuted; and many were the stumbling-blocks of the times: and these things were to try the temper of mankind. And when christian churches were erected by the indefatigable labours of St. PAUL and others, that God might thoroughly try every heart, he not only suffered the wicked world to rise in arms against them, but also let *Satan* loose, to transform himself into an *Angel of Light*, and, as it were, to inspire, and send forth his ministers, transformed into the apostles of Christ, to vent heretical doctrines, and foment strife and division. In the mean while, the secure and wicked world looked on, pleased, no doubt, to see their debates and divisions, and glad they could have such a handle against *Christianity*, and so good a plea to justify their infidelity: and God delighted to have things under circumstances so perfectly well adapted to a state of trial. He loved to try the apostles, to see how they would be affected and act; when not only the world was in arms against them, but many of their own converts turned to be their enemies too, by the influence of false teachers. He loved to try private christians, to see how their hearts would be affected towards the truths of the gospel, and the true ministers of Christ, and towards their temporal interest, while the truths of the gospel were denied or perverted, and the true ministers of Christ despised and stigmatized by heretics, and their temporal interest exposed to the rage of a wicked, merciless world: And he loved to try hypocrites, to see whether they would not renounce the truth they pretended so highly to value, and become disaffected towards the ministers of Christ they seemed so dearly to love, and follow false teachers, or fall off to the world.

It is reasonable and fit, and a thing becoming and beautiful, that beings in a state of probation should be tried; and God looks upon the present outward ease and comfort even of his own people, as a matter of no importance, compared with things spiritual and eternal. Eternity, with all its importance, lies open to his view; and time appears as a point, and all its concerns as things comparatively of no worth. If the wicked are in prosperity, and the righteous in adversity, or all things come alike to all, God is well pleased, be-

cause things of time are of so little importance, and because such an administration of things is suited to a state of trial. There will be time enough hereafter for the righteous to be rewarded, and the wicked punished. In this view of things, we may, in a measure, understand the darkest, and account for the most mysterious, dispensations of divine providence, and discern the wisdom of the divine government.

It has doubtless appeared as a thing strange and dark to many pious persons, and occasioned not a little perplexity of mind, to observe what has come to pass in *New-England* since the year 1740.—That there should be so general an out-pouring of the spirit—so many hundreds and thousands awakened all over the country, and such an almost universal external reformation, and so many receive the word with joy; and yet, after all, things come to be as they now are: so many fallen away to carnal security, and so many turned enthusiasts and heretics, and the country so generally settled in their prejudices against experimental religion and the doctrines of the gospel, and a flood of *Arminianism* and immorality, ready to deluge the land: but, as strange and dark as it may have seemed, yet doubtless if any of us had lived with the Israelites in the wilderness, or in the three first ages after Christ, or in the time of the reformation from *Popery*, the dispensations of Divine Providence would, upon the whole, have appeared much more mysterious than they do now. And yet those were times when God was doing glorious things for his Church. And indeed, it has happened in our day, however strange it may seem to us, no otherwise than our Saviour foretold it commonly would under the gospel dispensation, at least till Satan is bound, that he may deceive the nations no more. The *sower* goes forth to sow, and some seed falls by the way-side, and some on stony, and some on thorny, and some on good ground; and while he is sowing good seed, an *enemy* in the night, the devil, unobserved, sows *tares:* now, when the *sun* is up, *i. e.* when new times come on, and trials approach, the main of the seed is lost; not only what fell by the way-side, but also what fell on the stony and thorny ground. And when the *good ground* is about to bring forth fruit, the *tares* begin to appear too. Mat.

xiii. Thus it has always been.—This is a state of trial, and God has permitted so many sad and awful things to happen in times of reformation, with design to prove the children of men, and know what is in their hearts.

The young people almost all over *New-England* professed they would for ever renounce youthful vanities, and seek the Lord. "Well," God, in the course of his Providence, as it were, says, "I will try you." Seeming converts expressed great love to Christ, his truths, and ministers, and ways: "Well," says God, "I will try you." Multitudes, being enemies to all true religion, longed to see the whole reformation fall into disgrace, and things return to their own channel; and they sought for objections and stumbling-blocks: "Well," says God, "you may have them, and I will try and see how you will be affected, and what you will say, and whether you will be as glad when the cause of my SON is betrayed by the miscarriages of those that profess to be his friends, as the *Jews* of old were, when my SON himself was betrayed into their hands by *Judas*." Thus God means to try every one.

A compassionate sense of the exercises, which godly persons, especially among common people, might be under, in these evil days, while some are fallen away, and others are clapping their hands and rejoicing with all their hearts to see Zion laid waste; while *Arminians* are glossing their scheme, and appealing to reason and common sense, as though their principles were near or quite self-evident to all men of thought and candour; and while *enthusiasts* are going about as men inspired and immediately sent by the Almighty, pretending to extraordinary sanctity, and bold in it that they are so holy in themselves, and so entirely on the Lord's side, that all godly people must, and cannot but see as they do, and fall in with them, unless they are become blind, dead, and carnal; and gotten back into the world; a compassionate sense, I say, of the exercises of mind, which pious persons among common people might have, in such a trying situation of things, was the first motive which excited me to enter upon this work, which I now offer to the public: and to make divine truths plain to such, and to strip error naked before their

eyes, that they might be established, and comforted, and quickened in their way heavenward, was the end I had in view: and, accordingly, I have laboured very much to adapt myself to the lowest capacities, not meaning to write a book for the learned and polite, but for common people, and especially for those who are godly among them.

To these, therefore, that they may read what I have written with the greater profit, I will offer these two directions:

1. *Labour after determinate ideas of God, and a sense of his infinite glory.* This will spread a light over all the duties and doctrines of religion, and help you to understand the law and the gospel, and to pry into the mysteries, and discern the beauties, of the divine government. By much the greatest part of what I have written, besides showing what GOD is, consists in but so many propositions deduced from the divine perfections. Begin here, therefore, and learn what GOD is, and then what the *moral law* is; and this will help you to understand what our ruin is, and what the way of our recovery by free grace through JESUS CHRIST. The Bible is designed for rational creatures, and has God for its author; and you may therefore depend upon it, that it contains a scheme perfectly rational, divine, and glorious; and the pleasure of divine knowledge will a thousand times more than recompense all our reading, study, and pains: only content not yourselves with a general superficial knowledge, but enter thoroughly into things.

2. *Practise, as well as read.* The end of reading and knowledge is practice: and holy practice will help you to understand what you read. *Love God with all your heart, and your neighbour as yourself;* and you cannot but understand me, while, in the first Discourse, I show what is implied in these two great commands: and practice repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ; and the second Discourse, which treats of the nature of the gospel, and a genuine compliance therewith, will naturally become plain and easy: and while you daily study divine truths in your heads, and digest them well in your hearts, and practise them in your lives, your knowledge and holiness will increase, and God's word and providence be better understood,

your perplexing difficulties will be more solved, and you be established, strengthened and comforted, in your way heavenward; and your light shining before men, they will see your good works, and your Father which is in Heaven will be glorified—All which are the hearty desire and prayer of

Your Servant in JESUS CHRIST,

JOSEPH BELLAMY.

Bethlem, April 25, 1750.

TRUE RELIGION DELINEATED.

DISCOURSE I.

SHOWING THE NATURE OF THE DIVINE LAW, AND WHEREIN CONSISTS A REAL CONFORMITY TO IT.

MATTHEW xxii. 37, 38, 39, 40.

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

THE INTRODUCTION.

TRUE religion consists in a conformity to the *law* of God, and in a compliance with the *gospel* of Christ. The religion of innocent man consisted only in a conformity to the law—the law of nature, with the addition of one positive precept: he had no need of gospel-grace. But when man lost his innocency, and became guilty and depraved; when he fell under the wrath of God and power of sin, he needed a Redeemer and a Sanctifier; and in the gospel, a Redeemer and a Sanctifier are provided, and a way for our obtaining pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace is opened: a compliance with which does now, therefore, become part of the religion of a fallen creature. Now, if we can but rightly understand the *law*, and rightly understand the *gospel*, we may easily see wherein a conformity to the one, and a compliance with the other, does consist; and so what *true religion* is.

For the present, let us take the *law* under consideration. And it will be proper to inquire into these following particulars: 1. What duty does God require of us in his law?—2. From what motives must that duty be done?—3. What is that

precise measure of duty which God requires in his law? And a short, but very clear and plain answer to all these questions we have before us in our text; which is the words of our blessed Saviour, and in which he does upon design declare what the sum and substance of the law is. He had a question put to him in these words: "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" To which he answers, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c.; this is the first. The second is like unto it," &c. The ten commandments are summed up in these two; and every duty enjoined in the law, and inculcated in the prophets, is but a deduction from these two, in which all are radically contained. A thorough understanding of these two will therefore give us an insight into all. Let us now, therefore, begin with taking the *first* of these into particular consideration. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*, &c. Here is, 1. The duty required, viz. *love to God.* 2. The grounds and reasons of the duty intimated—*Because he is the Lord our God.* 3. The measure of duty required—*With all thy heart*, &c.

In discoursing upon these words, I will therefore endeavour to show,

I. What is implied in love to God.

II. From what motives we are required to love him.

III. What is the measure of love which is required.

SECTION I.

SHOWING WHAT IS IMPILED IN LOVE TO GOD.

I. I am to show *what is implied in love to* GOD.

And,

1. *A true knowledge of God* is *implied*; for this lays the foundation of love. A spiritual sight of God, and a sense of his glory and beauty, begets love. When HE that commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines in our hearts, and gives us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God; and when we, with open face, behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, then we are changed into the same image: the temper

and frame of our hearts become like God's, (to speak after the manner of men:) we begin to feel towards God, in a measure, as he does towards himself; i. e. to love him with all our hearts. 2 *Cor.* iii. 18. & iv. 6. For now we begin to perceive the grounds and reasons of that infinite esteem he has of himself, and infinite complacency in himself, and why he commands all the world to love and adore him. And the same grounds and reasons which move him thus to love himself, and command all the world to do so too, enkindle the divine flame in our hearts. When we see God, in a measure, such as he sees himself to be, and have a sense of his glory and beauty in being what he is, in a measure, as he himtelf has, then we begin to love him with the same kind of love, and from the same motives, as he himself does; only in an infinitely inferior degree. This sight and sense of God discovers the grounds of love to him. We see why he requires us to love him, and why we ought to love him—how right and fit it is; and so we cannot but love him.

This true knowledge of God supposes, that, in a measure, we see God to be just such a one as he is; and, in a measure, have a sense of his infinite glory and beauty in being such. For if our apprehensions of God are not right, it is not *God* we love, but only a false image of him framed in our own fancy*. And if we have not a sense of his glory and beauty

* How false and dangerous, therefore, is that principle, "That it is no matter what men's principles are, if their lives be but good." Just as if that external conformity to the law might be called a good life, which does not proceed from a genuine love to God in the heart: or just as if a man might have a genuine love to God in his heart, without having right apprehensions of him!—or just as if a man might have right apprehensions of God, let his apprehensions be what they will! Upon this principle, *Heathens*, *Jews*, and *Mahometans*, may be saved as well as *Christians*. And, upon this principle, the heathen nations need not much trouble themselves to know which is the right *God* among all the gods that are worshipped in the world; for it is no matter *which God* they think is the true, if their lives are but good. But why has God revealed himself in his word, if right apprehensions of God be a matter of such indifference in religion? and why did St. *Paul* take such pains to convert the heathen nations to Christianity, and so much fill up his epistles to them afterwards with *doctrinal points*, and be so strenuous as to say, "If an angel from heaven should preach any other gospel, LET HIM BE ACCURSED," if right apprehensions of God,

in being what he is, it is impossible we should truly love and esteem him for being such. To love God for being what he is, and yet not to have any sense of his glory and beauty in being such, implies a contradiction; for it supposes we have a sense of his glory and beauty when we have not: a sense of the beauty and amiableness of any object being always necessarily implied in love to it. Where no beauty or amiableness is seen, there can be no love. Love cannot be forced. Forced love is no love. If we are obliged to try to force ourselves to love any body, it is a sign they are very odious in your eyes, or at least that we see no beauty or amiableness in them, no form or comeliness, wherefore we should desire or delight in them. *Cant.* viii. 7. In all cases, so far as we see beauty, so far we love, and no further.

Most certainly that knowledge of God which is necessary to lay a foundation of genuine love to him, implies not only

and right principles of religion, be a matter of such indifference?—It is strange that such a notion should be ever once mentioned by any that pretend to be Christians, since it is subversive of the whole Christian religion: making *Christianity* no safer a way to heaven than *Paganism:* Yea, such a principle naturally tends to make all those who imbibe it, leave *love to God* and *faith in Christ* out of their religion, and quiet themselves with a mere empty form of external duties: Or, in other words, it tends to make them leave the *law* and the *gospel* out of their religion, and quiet themselves with mere *heathen morality;* for a man cannot attain to *love to God* and *faith in Christ*, without *right apprehensions of God and Christ:* Or, in other words, a man cannot attain to a real conformity to the law, and to a genuine compliance with the gospel, unless his principles respecting the law and gospel are right: but a man may attain to a good life, *externally*, let his apprehensions of *God* and *Christ*, of *law* and *gospel*, and all his principles of religion, be what they will. Let him be a heathen, or Jew, a Mahometan, or Christian; yea, if a man be an Atheist, he may live a good life externally; for any man has sufficient power to do every external duty; and it is many times much to men's honour and worldly interest to *appear righteous outwardly before men.* Matt. xxiii. 28.

N. B. What is here said, may with a litle alteration, be as well applied to some other sorts of men. So the *Moravians* say, "They care not what men's principles are, if they do but love the Saviour." So, in *New-England*, there are multitudes who care little or nothing what doctrines men believe, if they are but full of FLAMING ZEAL. Just as if it were no matter what kind of *Saviour* we frame an idea of, if we do but love him; nor what we are zealous about, if we are but FLAMING HOT.

right apprehensions of what he is, but also a sense of his glory and beauty in being such; for such a knowledge of God as consists merely in *speculation*, let it rise ever so high, and be ever so clear, will never move us to love him. Mere speculation, where there is no sense of beauty, will no sooner fill the heart with love, than a looking-glass will be filled with love by the image of a beautiful countenance, which looks into it: and a mere speculative knowledge of God, will not, cannot, beget a sense of his beauty in being what he is, when there is naturally no disposition in our hearts to account him glorious in being such, but wholly to the contrary. Rom. viii. 7. *The carnal mind is enmity against God.* When natures are in perfect contrariety, (the one sinful, and the other holy,) the more they are known to each other, the more is mutual hatred stirred up, and their entire aversion to each other becomes more sensible. The more they know of one another, the greater is their dislike, and the plainer do they feel it. Doubtless the fallen angels have a great degree of speculative knowledge; they have a very clear sight and great sense of what God is: but the more they know of God, the more they hate him: *i. e.* their hatred and aversion is stirred up the more, and they feel it plainer. So, awakened sinners, when under deep and thorough conviction, have comparatively a very clear sight and great sense of God; but it only makes them see and feel their native enmity, which before lay hid. A sight and sense of what God is, makes them see and feel what his law is, and so what their duty is, and so what their sinfulness is, and so what their danger is: It makes the *commandment come*, and so *sin revives*, and *they die*—Rom. vii. 7, 8, 9. The clearer sight and the greater sense they have of what God is, the more plainly do they perceive that perfect contrariety between his nature and their's: their aversion to God becomes discernible: they begin to see what enemies they are to him: and so the secret hypocrisy there has been in all their pretences of love, is discovered; and so their high conceit of their goodness, and all their hopes of finding favour in the sight of God upon the account of it, cease, die away, and come to nothing. *Sin revived and I died.* The greater sight and sense they have of what God is,

the plainer do they feel that they have no love to him; but the greatest aversion; for the more they know of God, the more their native enmity is stirred up. So, again, as soon as ever an unregenerate sinner enters into the world of spirits, where he has a much clearer sight and greater sense of what God is, immediately his native enmity works to perfection, and he blasphemes like a very devil: and that although perhaps he died full of seeming love and joy. As the *Galatians*, who once loved *Paul*, so as that they could even have plucked out their eyes and have given them to him; yet, when afterwards they came to know more clearly what kind of man he was, then they turned his enemies. And so, finally, all the wicked, at the day of Judgment, when they shall see very clearly what God is, will thereby only have all the enmity of their hearts stirred to perfection.—From all which it is exceedingly manifest, that the clearest speculative knowledge of God, is so far from bringing an unholy heart to love God, that it will only stir up the more aversion; and therefore, that knowledge of God which lays the foundation of love, must imply not only right apprehensions of what God is, but also a sense of his glory and beauty in being such*.

Wicked men and devils may know what God is, but none but holy beings have *any sense* of his infinite glory and beauty in being such; which *sense* in scripture-language, is called *seeing* and *knowing*. 1 John iii. 6. *Whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him.* 3 John, ver. 11. *He*

* I grant that if all our enmity against God arise merely from our conceiving him to be our enemy, then a manifestation of his love to our souls will cause our enmity to cease, and bring us to love him; nor will there be any need of a sense of the moral excellency of his nature to produce it; and so there will be no need of the sanctifying influences of the holy Spirit. A manifestation of the love of God to our souls will effectually change us—and thus a man may be under great terrors from a sense of the wrath of God, and may see the enmity of his heart in this sense; and may afterwards have, as he thinks, great manifestations of the love of God, and be filled with love and joy; and after all, never truly see the plague of his own heart, nor have his nature renewed: and a man's having experienced such a false conversion, naturally leads him to frame wrong notions of religion, and blinds his mind against the truth. Many of the *Antinomian* principles take rise from this quarter.

that doeth evil hath not seen God. 1 John ii. 4. *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.* Because wicked men have no sense of his glory and beauty, therefore they are said not to know God: For all knowledge without this is vain; it is but the form of knowledge. *Rom.* ii. 20. It will never enkindle divine love. And, in scripture, sinners are said to be *blind,* because, after all their light and knowledge, they have no sense of God's glory in being what he is, and so have no heart to love him. And hence also they are said to be *dead.* They know nothing of the ineffable glory of the divine nature, and the love of God is not in them. *John* v. 42. and viii. 19. 55.

2. Another thing implied in love to God is *esteem.* Esteem, strictly speaking, is that high and exalted thought of, and value for, any thing, which arises from a sight and sense of its own intrinsic worth, excellency, and beauty. So, a sense of the infinite dignity, greatness, glory, excellency, and beauty of the most high God, begets in us high and exalted thoughts of him, and makes us admire, wonder, and adore. Hence, the heavenly hosts fall down before the throne, and, under a sense of his ineffable glory, continually cry, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, the whole earth is full of thy glory.* And saints here below, while they behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are ravished; they esteem, they admire, they wonder, and adore; and, under some feebler sense of the ineffable glory of the divine nature, they begin to feel as they do in heaven, and to speak their language, and say, "Who is a God like unto thee! thy name alone is excellent, and thy glory is exalted above the heavens."

This high esteem of God disposes and inclines the heart to acquiesce, yea, to exult, in all the high prerogatives God assumes to himself.

God, from a consciousness of his own infinite excellency, his entire right to, and absolute authority over, all things, is disposed to take state to himself, and honour, and majesty, the kingdom, the power, and the glory; and he sets up himself as the most high God, supreme Lord, and sovereign Go-

vernor of the whole world, and bids all worlds adore him, and be in a most perfect subjection to him, and that with all their hearts; and esteems the wretch, who does not account this his highest happiness, worthy of eternal damnation. God thinks it infinitely becomes him to set up himself for a GOD, and to command all the world to adore him, upon pain of eternal damnation. He thinks himself fit to govern the world, and that the throne is his proper place, and that all love, honour, and obedience are his due. "I am the Lord, (says he,) and besides me there is no God. I am the Lord, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another. And thus and thus shall ye do, for I am the Lord. And cursed be every one that continues not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." Now, it would be infinitely wicked for the highest angel in heaven to assume any of this honour to himself; but it infinitely becomes the most high God thus to do. And when we see his infinite dignity, greatness, glory, and excellency, and begin rightly to esteem him, then his conduct, in all this, will begin to appear infinitely right and fit, and so infinitely beautiful and ravishing, and worthy to be rejoiced and exulted in. Psalm xci. 1. *The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice: let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof.*

And a sight and sense of the supreme, infinite glory and excellency of the divine nature, will not only make us glad that he is GOD, and KING, and GOVERNOR; but also exceedingly glad that we live under his government, and are to be his subjects and servants, and to be at his disposal. It will show us the grounds and reasons of his law; how infinitely right and fit it is that we should love him with all our hearts, and obey him in every thing; how infinitely unfit and wrong the least sin is, and how just the threatened punishment: and, at the same time, it will help us to see that all the nations of the earth are as a drop of the bucket, or small dust of the balance, before him; and that we ourselves are nothing, and less than nothing, in his sight. So that a right sight and sense of the supreme, infinite glory of God, will make us esteem him, so as to be glad that he is on the throne, and we at his footstool; that he is king, and we his

subjects; that he rules and reigns, and that we are absolutely in subjection, and absolutely at his disposal. In a word, we shall be glad to see him take all that honour to himself which he does, and shall be heartily reconciled to his government, and cordially willing to take our own proper places; and hereby a foundation will begin to be laid in our hearts for all things to come to rights. Job xlii. 5, 6. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.* Isa. ii. 11. *The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of man shall be brought down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted.* And that all is implied in a genuine love to God, not only the reason of the thing and the plain tenour of Scripture manifest, but it is self-evident; for if we do not so esteem God as to be thus glad to have *him* take his place, and we *ours*, it argues secret dislike, and proves that there is secret rebellion in our hearts. Thus, therefore, must we esteem the glorious God, or be reputed rebels in his sight.

3. Another thing implied in love to God may be called *benevolence.* When we are acquainted with any person, and he appears very excellent in our eyes, and we highly esteem him, it is natural now heartily to wish him well; we are concerned for his interest; we are glad to see it go well with him, and sorry to see it go ill with him; and ready at all times cheerfully to do what we can to promote his welfare. Thus *Jonathan* felt towards *David:* and thus love to God will make us feel towards him, his honour, and interest in the world. When God is seen in his infinite dignity, greatness, glory, and excellency, as the most high God, supreme Lord, and sovereign governor of the whole world, and a sense of his infinite worthiness is hereby raised in our hearts, this enkindles a holy benevolence, the natural language of which is, *Let God be glorified.* Psalm xcvi. 7, 8. *And be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let thy glory be above all the earth.* Psalm lvii. 5. 11.

This holy disposition sometimes expresses itself in *earnest longings* that God would glorify himself, and honour his great name; and bring all the world into an entire subjection to him. And hence this is the natural language of true love.

Our father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven. Matt. vi. 9, 10. And hence, when God is about to bring to pass great and glorious things to the honour of his great name, it causes great joy and rejoicing. Psalm xcvi. 11, 12, 13. *Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad: let the sea roar and the fulness thereof: let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord; for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.*

And hence, again, when God seems to be about to do, or permit any thing, which, as it seems to us tends most certainly to bring reproach and dishonour upon his great name, it occasions the greatest anguish and distress. Thus says God to *Moses*, "This is a stiff-necked people, let me alone that I may destroy them in a moment, and I will make of thee a great nation." But, says Moses, "What will become of thy great name? What will the *Egyptians* say? And what will all the nations round about say?" And he mourns and wrestles, cries and prays, begs and pleads, as if his heart would break: and, says he, "If I may not be heard, but this dishonour and reproach must come upon thy great name, it cannot comfort me to tell me of making of me a great nation: pray let me rather die and be forgotten for ever, and let not my name be numbered among the living; but let it be blotted out of thy book." Well, says God, "I will hear thee. But, as truly as I live, I will never put up these affronts; but the whole world shall know what a holy and sin-hating God I am, and be filled with my glory: for the carcasses of all those who have treated me thus shall fall in the wilderness; and here they shall wander till forty years are accomplished, and then I will do so and so to their children, and so secure the honour of my power, truth, and faithfulness." And now Moses is content to live in the wilderness, and do, and suffer, and undergo any thing, if God will but take care of his great name. *Exod.* xxxii. *Numb.* xiv. And as it is distressing to a true lover of God, to see God's name, and works, and ways, fall into reproach and contempt;

and as, on the other hand, there is no greater joy than to see God glorify himself, (*Exod.* xv.) hence, this world, even on this account, may be fitly called *a vale of tears* to the people of God, because here they are always seeing reproach and contempt cast upon God, his name, his works, and his ways: And hence, at the day of judgment, all these tears shall be wiped from their eyes, because then they shall see all things turned to the advancement of the glory of his great name, throughout the endless ages of eternity. *Rev.* xix. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Again, this divine benevolence, or wishing that God may be glorified, sometimes expresses itself in earnest longings that all worlds might join together to bless and praise the name of the Lord; and it appears infinitely fit and right, and so infinitely beautiful and ravishing, that the whole intelligent creation should for ever join in the most solemn adoration: yea, and that sun, moon, stars; earth, air, sea; birds, beasts, fishes; mountains and hills, and all things, should, in their way, display the divine perfections, and praise the name of the Lord, because his name alone is excellent, and his glory is exalted above the heavens. And hence the pious *Psalmist* so often breathes this divine language: Psalm ciii. 20, 21, 22. *Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength—that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts, ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure. Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion: Bless the Lord, O my soul.* Psalm cxlviii. 1—13. *Praise ye the Lord: praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights. Praise him, all ye his angels: praise him, all his hosts. Praise him, sun and moon, &c. Let them praise the name of the Lord; for his name alone is excellent, &c.* See also the 95, 96, 97, and 98th Psalms, &c. &c.

Lastly, from this divine benevolence arises a free and genuine disposition to consecrate and give up ourselves entirely to the Lord for ever—to walk in all his ways, and keep all his commands, seeking his glory: For if we desire that God may be glorified, we shall naturally be disposed to seek his glory. A sight and sense of the infinite dignity, greatness, glory, and excellency of God, the great creator, preserver and governor of

the world, who has entire right unto, and an absolute authority over, all things, makes it appear infinitely fit that all things should be for him, and him alone; and that we should be entirely for him, and wholly devoted to him; and that it is infinitely wrong to live to ourselves, and make our own interest our last end. The same views which make the godly earnestly long to have God glorify himself, and to have all the world join to give him glory, thoroughly engage them for their parts to live to God. After *David* had called upon all others to bless the Lord, he concludes with, *Bless the Lord, O my soul:* And this is the language of heaven. Rev. iv. 11. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: For thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created.* And it was their *maxim* in the Apostles' days, *Whether they ate or drank, or whatever they did, all must be done to the glory of God.* 1 Cor. x. 31. And it was their way *not to live to themselves, but to the Lord.* 2 Cor. v. 15. Yea, *Whether they lived, to live to the Lord; or whether they died, to die to the Lord.* Rom. xiv. 7, 8. This was what they commended. *Phil.* ii. 20, 21. And this was what they enjoined, as that in which the very spirit of true religion consisted.—*Eph.* vi. 5, 6, 7. 1 *Cor.* vi. 20. *Rom.* xii. 1. & vii. 4.

All rational creatures, acting as such, are always influenced by motives in their whole conduct. Those things are always the most powerful motives, which appear to us most worthy of our choice. The principal motive to an action, is always the ultimate end of the action: Hence, if God, his honour, and interest, appear to us as the supreme good, and most worthy of our choice, then God, his honour, and interest, will be the principal motive and ultimate end of all we do. If we love God supremely, we shall live to him ultimately; if we love him with all our hearts, we shall serve him with all our souls: Just as, on the other hand, if we love ourselves above all, then self-love will absolutely govern us in all things; if self-interest be the principal motive, then self-interest will be the last end, in our whole conduct: Thus, then, we see, that if GOD be highest in esteem, then *God's interest* will be the principal motive and the last end of the whole conduct of rational creatures; and if *self* be the highest in esteem, then *self-interest* will be

the principal motive and last end: And hence we may observe, that where *self-interest* governs men, they are considered in scripture as *serving themselves.* Hos. x. 1. Zec. vii. 5, 6. And where *God's interest* governs, they are considered as *serving the Lord.* 2 Cor. v. 15. Gal. i. 10. Eph. vi. 5, 6, 7. compared with Tit. ii. 9, 10. To love GOD so as to serve *him,* is what the law requires; to love *self,* so as to serve *self,* is *rebellion* against the majesty of heaven. And the same infinite obligations which we are under to love God above ourselves; even the same infinite obligations are we under to live to God ultimately, and not to ourselves. And therefore it is as great a sin to live to ourselves ultimately, as it is to love ourselves supremely.

4. And lastly. *Delight* in God, is also implied in love to him. By delight we commonly mean that pleasure, sweetness, and satisfaction, which we take in any thing that is very dear to us. When a man appears very excellent to us, and we esteem him, and wish him all good, we also, at the same time, feel a delight in him, and a sweetness in his company and conversation; we long to see him when absent; we rejoice in his presence; the enjoyment of him tends to make us happy: So, when a holy soul beholds God in the infinite moral excellency and beauty of his nature, and loves him supremely, and is devoted to him entirely, now also he delights in him superlatively. His delight and complacency is as great as his esteem, and arises from a sense of the same moral excellency and beauty. From this delight in God arise longings after a further acquaintance with him, and greater nearness to him. Job. xxiii. 3.—*O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat!* Longings after communion with him. Psalm lxiii. 1, 2. *O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee: my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is. To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.* Verse 8. *My soul followeth hard after thee.* A holy rejoicing in God. Hab. iii. 17, 18. *Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vine; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall*

be no herd in the stalls. Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. Finally, from this delight in God arises a holy disposition to renounce all other things, and live wholly upon him, and take up everlasting content in him, and in him alone. Psalm lxxiii. 25, 26. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.* The vain man takes content in vain company; the worldly man takes content in riches; the ambitious man in honour and applause; the philosopher in philosophical speculations; the legal hypocrite in his round of duties; the evangelical hypocrite in his experiences, his discoveries, his joys, his raptures, and confident expectation of heaven: but the true lover of God takes his content in God himself. *Psalm* iv. 6, 7. And thus we see what is implied in love to God.

And now, that this is a right representation of the nature of that love which is required in the first and great commandment of the law, upon which chiefly all the law and the prophets hang, is manifest, not only from the reason of the thing, and from what has been already said, but also from this, that such a love to God as this *lays a sure and firm foundation for all holy obedience.* That love to God is of the right kind, which will effectually influence us to keep his commands. *John* xv. 14. 1 *John* ii. 3, 4, 5. But it is evident, from the nature of things, that such a love as this will effectually influence us to do so. As self-love naturally causes us to set up self and seek self-interest, so this love to God will naturally influence us to set up God and seek his interest. As delight in the world naturally makes us seek after the enjoyment of the world, so this delight in God will naturally influence us to seek after the enjoyment of God: and while we love God primarily for being what he is, we cannot but, for the same reason, love his law, which is a transcript of his nature, and love to conform to it. If we loved him only from self-love, from the fear of hell, or from the hopes of heaven, we might, at the same time, hate his law: but if we love him for being what he is, we cannot but love to be like him; which is what his law requires. To suppose that a man loves

God supremely for what he is, and yet does not love to be like him, is an evident contradiction. It is to suppose a thing supremely loved; and yet, at the same time, not loved at all: so that, to a demonstration, this is the very kind of love which the Lord our God requires of us. So, saints in heaven love God perfectly, and so the good man on earth begins, in a weak and feeble manner, to love God: for there is but one kind of love required in the law; and so but one kind of love which is of the right sort: for no kind of love can be of the right sort, but that very kind of love which the law requires. There is, therefore, no difference between their love in heaven, and ours here upon earth, but only in degree.

SECTION II.

SHOWING FROM WHAT MOTIVES TRUE LOVE TO GOD TAKES ITS RISE.

II. I now proceed to show more particularly *from what motives we are required thus to love God.* Indeed, I have done this in part already; for I have been obliged all along, in showing what is implied in love to God, to keep my eye upon the first and chief ground and reason of love, namely, what God is in himself. But there are other considerations which increase our obligations to love him and live to him; which ought, therefore, to come into the account. And I design here to take a general view of all the reasons and motives which ought to influence us to love the Lord our God; all which are implied in those words, *The Lord thy God. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,* i. e. because he is the LORD and our GOD.

1. The first and chief motive which is to influence us to love God with all our hearts, is *his infinite dignity and greatness, glory and excellency;* or, in one word, *his infinite amiableness.* We are to love him with all our hearts, because he is the LORD; because he is what he is, and just such a Being as he is. On this account, primarily, and antecedent to all other considerations, he is infinitely amiable; and, therefore, on this account, primarily, and antecedent to all other considerations, ought he to appear infinitely amiable in our eyes. This is the first and chief reason and ground upon which his

law is founded, I AM THE LORD. (*Exod.* xx. 2. *Lev.* xix.) This, therefore, ought to be the first and chief motive to influence us to obey. The principal reason which moves him to require us to love him, ought to be the principal motive of our love. If the fundamental reason of his requiring us to love him with all our hearts, is because he is what he is, and yet the bottom of our love be something else, then our love is not what his law requires, but a thing of quite another nature. Yea, if the foundation of our love to God is not because he is what he is, in truth, we love him not at all. If I feel a sort of respect to one of my neighbours, who is very kind to me, and either do not know what sort of man he is, or, if I do, yet do not like him, it is plain, it is his kindness I love, and not his person; and all my seeming love to him is nothing but self-love in another shape: and let him cease being kind to me, and my love will cease: let him cross me, and I shall hate him. *Put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face,* (Job i. 11.) said the devil concerning *Job*; and, indeed, Job would have done so, had not his love to God taken its rise from another motive than God's kindnesses to him. But why need I multiply words? For it seems even self-evident that God's loveliness ought to be the first and chief thing for which we love him.

Now, God is infinitely lovely, because he is what he is; or, in other words, his infinite dignity and greatness, glory and excellency, are the result of his natural and moral perfections. So that it is a clear sight and realizing sense of his natural and moral perfections, as they are revealed in his works and in his word, that make him appear, to a HOLY soul, as a Being of infinite dignity and greatness, glory and excellency. Thus, the Queen of *Sheba*, seeing and conversing with *Solomon*, and viewing his works, under a sense of the large and noble endowments of his mind, was even ravished; and cried out, *The one half was not told me!* And thus the holy and divinely enlightened soul, upon seeing God, reading his word, and meditating on his wonderful works, under a sense of his divine and incomprehensible perfectious, is ravished with his infinite dignity, majesty, greatness, glory, and excellency; and loves, admires, and adores; and says, *Who is a God like unto thee!*

His nattural perfections are,

(1.) His *infinite understanding*, whereby he knows himself, and all things possible, and beholds all things past, present, and to come, at one all-comprehensive view. So that from everlasting to everlasting, his knowledge can neither increase nor diminish, nor his views of things suffer the least variation; being always absolutely complete, and consequently necessarily always the same.

(2.) His *almighty power*, whereby he is able, with infinite ease, to do any thing that he pleases.

And his moral perfections are,

(1.) His *infinite wisdom*, whereby he is able, and is inclined to, contrive and order all things, in all worlds, for the best ends, and after the best manner.

(2.) His *perfect holiness*, whereby he is inclined infinitely to love right, and hate wrong: or according to scripture-phrase, *to love righteousness and hate iniquity*.

(3.) His *impartial justice*, whereby he is unchangeably inclined to render to every one according to his deserts.

(4.) His *infinite goodness*, whereby he can find in his heart to bestow the greatest favours upon his creatures, if he pleases and is inclined to bestow all that is best, all things considered.

(5.) His *truth* and *faithfulness*, whereby he is inclined to fulfil all his will, according to his word: So that there is an everlasting harmony between his will, his word, and his performance.

And his being, and all his natural and moral perfections, and his glory and blessedness, which result from them, he has in himself, and of himself underived; and is necessarily infinite, eternal, unchangeable, in all; and so absolutely independent, self-sufficient, and all-sufficient.

"This is the God, whom we do love!
"This is the God, whom we adore!
"In him we trust—to him we live;
"He is our all, for evermore."

Now there are three ways by which the perfections of God are discovered to the children of men: By his works, by his word, and by his spirit. By the two first, we see him to be

what he is; by the last we behold his infinite glory in being such: The two first produce a speculative knowledge; the last, a sense of moral beauty.

First. These perfections of God are discovered *by his works*, i. e. by his *creating, preserving,* and *governing the world;* and by his *redeeming, sanctifying,* and *saving his people.*

1. *By his creating the world.* He it is, who has stretched abroad the heavens as a curtain, and spread them out as a tent to dwell in; who has created the sun, moon, and stars, and appointed them their courses; who has hung the earth upon nothing; who has fixed the mountains, and bounded the seas, and formed every living creature. All the heavenly hosts he hath made, and created all the nations that dwell upon the earth: and the birds of the air, and the beasts of the field, and the fishes of the sea, and every creeping thing, are the works of his hands: and the meanest of his works are full of unsearchable wonders, far surpassing our understanding. *So that the invisible things of God, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead:* as St. *Paul* observes, in *Rom.* i. 20.

2. *By his preserving the world.* His eyes run to and fro throughout all the world, beholding every thing. His eyes are upon all his works; so that even the sparrows are not forgotten by him, and the very hairs of our head are all numbered. And he holds all things in being; and the opening of his hand fills the desires of every living creature: even the whole family of heaven and earth live upon his goodness, and are maintained by his bounty. In a word, his infinite understanding sees all; his infinite power upholds all; his infinite wisdom takes care of all, and his infinite goodness provides for all, and that every moment; so that the invisible things of God are discovered in preserving as well as in creating the world. And hence when the pious *Psalmist* meditates on the works of creation and preservation, he sees God in them and views his perfections, and is touched at heart with a sense of his glory; and is filled with high and exalted, and with admiring and adoring thoughts of God. So, Psalm xix. 1. *The heavens declare the glory of the Lord,*

&c. And Psalm xcv. 1. *O come, let us sing unto the Lord,* &c.—But why?—Verse 3. *For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.*—But how does this appear? Why, (ver. 4, 5.) *In his hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is his also: The sea is his, and he made it; and his hands formed the dry land:* Ver. 6. *O, therefore, come let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.* And again, in Psal. xcvi. 1. *O sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord all the earth.* But why? Ver. 4. *For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised: He is to be feared above all gods.* But wherein does this appear? Why, (ver. 5.) *All the gods of the nations are idols; but the* LORD *made the heavens.* And once more, in Psal. civ. 1, 2, &c. *Bless the Lord, O my soul.* But why? *Thou art very great: thou art clothed with honour and majesty.* But how does this appear? Why, *Thou hast stretched out the heavens as a curtain.* And ver. 5. *And laid the foundations of the earth, that it cannot be removed for ever.* And ver. 27. *All wait upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season.* Ver. 28. *That thou givest them, they gather: thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good.* And throughout the whole *Psalm* he is meditating on the creation and preservation of the world; and viewing the divine perfections therein discovered, and admiring the divine glory, and wondering and adoring; and finally concludes with, *Bless the Lord, O my soul: Praise ye the Lord.* But,

3. *His perfections are still much more eminently displayed in that moral government which he maintains over the intelligent part of the creation; especially his moral perfections.* In the works of nature his natural perfections are to be seen: but in his moral government of the world, he acts out his heart, and shows the temper of his mind. Indeed, all the perfections of God are to be seen in the work of creation, if we view angels and men, and consider what they were, as they came first out of his hands, holy and pure. But still God's conduct towards them, under the character of their King and Governor, more evidently discovers the very temper of his heart. As the tree is known by the fruit, so God's moral perfections may be known by his moral government

of the world. The whole world was created for a stage, on which a variety of scenes were to be opened; in and by all which, God designed to exhibit a most exact image of himself. For, as God loves himself infinitely for being what he is, so he takes infinite delight in acting forth and expressing all his heart. He loves to see his nature and image shine in all his works, and to behold the whole world filled with his glory: and he perfectly loves to have his conduct, the whole of it taken together, an *exact* resemblance of himself; and infinitely abhors, in his public conduct, in the least to counteract the temper of his heart; so as, by his public conduct, to seem to be what indeed he is not. So that in his moral government of the world, we may see his inward disposition, and discern the true nature of his moral perfections. And indeed all his perfections are herein discovered; particularly,

(1.) *His infinite understanding.* High on his throne in heaven he sits, and all his vast dominions lie open to his view. His all-seeing eye views all his courts above, and sees under the whole heavens, looks through the earth, and pierces all the dark caverns of hell; so that his acquaintance with all worlds and all things is absolutely perfect and complete. He can behold all the solemn worship of heaven, and the inmost thoughts of all that great assembly: he can behold all the sin, misery, and confusion that overspread the whole earth, and the inmost temper of every mortal; and look through hell, and see all the rebellion, and blasphemy, and cunning devices of those infernal fiends; and all this at one all-comprehending view. And thus, as high Governor of the whole world, he continually beholds all things; whereby a foundation is laid for the exercise of all his other perfections in his government over all. See the omniscience of God elegantly described in *Psalm* cxxxix. 1—12. And being perfectly acquainted with himself, as well as with all his creatures, he cannot but see what conduct from him towards them, will, all things considered, be most right, and fit, and amiable, and most becoming such an one as he is; and also what conduct from them to him is his due, and their duty. By his infinite understanding, he is perfectly acquainted with right and wrong—with what is fit, and what unfit. And, by the

moral rectitude of his nature, he infinitely loves the one and hates the other, and is disposed to conduct accordingly;—of which more presently. Psalm cxlvii. 1. *Praise ye the Lord, for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant, and praise is comely.* But why? Ver. 5. *Great is our Lord, and of great power;* HIS UNDERSTANDING IS INFINITE. But wherein does that appear? Why, (4.) *He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them* ALL *by their names.* Now, if the infinite understanding of God may be seen in this one particular, much more is it in the regular ordering and disposing of all things, throughout the whole universe; and that, not only in the *natural,* but also in the *moral* world.

(2.) *His infinite power* is displayed in the government of the world. For he does according to his pleasure in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; so that none can stay his hand, or hinder the execution of his designs. Have rebellions broken out in any part of his dominions? he has manifestly had the rebels entirely in his hands. They have lain absolutely at his mercy; and he has dealt with them according to his sovereign pleasure; and none has been able to make any resistance; nor has there been any to deliver them out of his hands. When rebellion broke out in heaven, he crushed the rebels in a moment. They fell beneath the weight of his hand; they felt his power; they despaired; they sunk to hell; and there he reserves them in chains; nor can they stir from their dark abode, but by his special permission. And when rebellion broke out upon earth, the rebels were equally in his hands, and at his mercy, unable to make any resistance; although he was pleased, in his infinite wisdom, to take another method with them. But he has since discovered his power, in treading down his implacable enemies under foot, many a time. He destroyed the old world, burned *Sodom,* drowned *Pharaoh* and his hosts, and turned *Nebuchadnezzar* into a beast. If his enemies have exalted themselves, yet he has been above them—brought them down; and discovered to all the world that they are in his hands, and without strength, at his disposal. Or if he has suffered them to go on and prosper, and

exalt themselves greatly, yet still he has been above them, and has accomplished his designs by them, and at last has brought them down. Haughty *Nebuchadnezzar*, when he had broken the nations to pieces, as if he had been the hammer of the whole earth, now thought himself *somebody*; and *Alexander* the Great, when conquering the world, aspired to be thought the son of *Jupiter*. But the most high God, the great and almighty Governor of the world, always had such scourges of mankind only as a rod in his hand, with which he has executed judgment upon a wicked world. *Howbeit, they meant not so, neither did their hearts think so.* But it was in their hearts to gratify their ambition, avarice and revenge. However, he was above them; and always such have been in his hands, as *the ax is in the hands of him that heweth therewith*, or as *the saw is in the hands of him that shaketh it*; or as *the rod is in the hand of him that lifteth it up*. And when he has done with the rod, he always breaks it and burns it. See *Isa.* x. 5—19.

And as this great King has discovered his almighty power, by crushing rebellions in his kingdom, and subduing rebels, so he has, also, in protecting his friends, and working deliverance for his people. He made a path for his people through the sea; he led them through the wilderness. He gave them water to drink out of the rock; and fed them with angels' food. In the day-time he led them by a cloud, and all the night with the light of fire. He brought them to the promised land, and drove out the heathen before them; and in all their distresses, whenever they cried unto him, he delivered them. And as the supreme Governor of the world, in the days of old, did thus discover his almighty power in governing among his intelligent creatures, so he is still, in various ways and manners, in his providential dispensations, evidently discovering that he can do all things. And his people see it and believe it; and admire and adore. Read *Psalm* cv.

(3.) Again, *His infinite wisdom* is discovered in an endless variety of instances; in all his government throughout all his dominions; in his managing all things to the glory of his Majesty, to the good of his loyal subjects, and to the confusion

of his foes. There has never any thing happened in all his dominions, and never will, but has been, and shall be made entirely subservient to his honour and glory. Even the contempt cast upon him by his rebellious subjects, he turns to his greater glory; as in the case of *Pharaoh*, who set up himself against God, and said, *Who is the Lord, that I should obey him? I know not the Lord, nor will I let Israel go.* And he exalted himself, and dealt proudly and haughtily; and hardened his heart, and was resolved he would not regard God, nor be bowed nor conquered by him; for he despised him in his heart. But the more he carried himself, as if there were no God, the more were the being and perfections of God made manifest; for the more he hardened his heart, the more stout and stubborn he was, the more God honoured himself in subduing him. Yea, God, in his infinite wisdom, suffered him to be as high and haughty, as stout and stubborn, as he pleased; he took off all restraints from him; permitted the *magicians* to imitate the miracles of *Moses*, so that *Pharaoh*, in seeing, might not see, nor be convinced; and he ordered that the plagues should last but for a short season, that *Pharaoh* might have respite; and thus it was that God hardened his heart. And God, in his infinite wisdom, did all this with a view to his own glory; as he tells *Pharaoh* by the hand of Moses—"Such and such plagues I design to bring upon you, and to do so and so with you." *And, indeed, for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.* Exod. ix. 16. And, accordingly, God was illustriously honoured, at last, upon *Pharaoh*, and upon all his host, at the Red Sea; and the *Egyptians*, and all the neighbouring nations, were made to know that he was the LORD; and his name became dreadful among the heathen. And we find that, in three or four hundred years after, the *Philistines* had not forgotten it; for when the *ark*, in the days of *Eli*, was carried into the camp of *Israel*, the *Philistines* were sore afraid, and said, "God is come into the camp: Wo unto us: Who shall deliver us out of the hands of these mighty Gods? These are the Gods that smote the

Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness," &c. 1 Sam. iv.

So God wisely ordered and over-ruled all things that befell the children of Israel in the wilderness, to accomplish the ends he had in view. His designs were to get himself a great name, and fill the whole earth with his glory, (*Num.* xiv. 21.) and to try and humble his people, and make them know, that it was not for their righteousness that he brought them into the land of *Canaan*, (*Deut.* ix.) And every thing that came to pass, for those forty years, was admirably calculated to attain these ends. The news of *Pharaoh*'s overthrow; of God's coming down upon mount Sinai, in the presence of all Israel, and abiding there so long a time with such awful majesty; and of the pillar of a cloud by day, and of fire by night; of the manna; of the water flowing out of a rock, and following them; of their murmurings and insurrections, and God's judgments upon them; I say, the news of these, and other things of this nature, that happened to them for those forty years, flew all the world over, and filled all the nations of the earth with the greatest astonishment; and made them think there was no God like the *God of Israel.* (Numb. xiv. 13, 14, 15.) By all these things, and by God's bringing his people, at last, to the possession of the land of *Canaan*, according to his promise, there was exhibited a specimen of God's infinite knowledge, power, wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth; and that before the eyes of all the nations. And so the whole earth was filled with his glory; i. e. with the clear manifestations of those perfections in which his glory consists. And thus his great end was obtained. And, in the mean time, all the wanderings, and trials, and sins, and sorrows of the children of *Israel*, together with all the wonderful works which their eyes beheld, and wherein God discovered himself for those forty years, had a natural tendency to try them, to humble them, and break their hearts, and make them know, that, not for their righteousness, nor for the uprightness of their hearts, did God at last show them that great mercy; and to convince them of the exceeding great obligations they were under to love, and fear, and serve the Lord for ever. And so, the other great

end which God had in view was accomplished. *Deut.* viii. ix. x. And now, all these things were by God wisely done; and in this his conduct, his infinite wisdom is to be seen*. And thus it is in all God's dispensations, throughout all his dominions, with regard to the whole universe in general, and to every intelligent creature in particular. His works are all done in wisdom; and so his infinite wisdom is discovered in all: and hence God appears infinitely glorious in the eyes of his people. *Deut.* xxxii. 3, 4. *Psalm* civ. 24. cv. 1. 45. 1 Cor. i. 24. 31.

(4.) Again, *His infinite purity and holiness* is also discovered in his government of the world; in all that he has done to establish *right*, and discountenance *wrong*, throughout all his dominions. His creating angels and men in his own image, with his law written on their hearts, manifested his disposition, and showed what he was pleased with. But his public conduct, as moral Governor of the world, has more evidently discovered the very temper of his heart, and shown how he loves *right* and hates *wrong*, to an infinite degree. Governors, among men, discover much of their disposition, and show what they love and what they hate, by their laws; and they show how fervent their love and hatred is, by all the methods they take to enforce them; and so does the great Governor of the world. By his laws, by his promises and threatenings, by his past conduct, and declared designs for the future, he manifests how he loves moral good and hates moral evil.

* If God had so ordered that *Abraham* had been born in the land of *Canaan*, and his posterity had multiplied greatly, and the other nations gradually, by sicknesses and wars, had wasted away and come to nothing, until there were none but the posterity of *Abraham* left, and they had filled the land, God's hand then would not have been seen; none of these excellent ends attained; all would have been resolved into natural causes. Therefore, God contrived where Abraham should be born; how he should leave his own country; have a promise of the land of *Canaan*; and how his seed should come to be in *Egypt*; come to be in great bondage and distress; how he would send, and how he would deliver them, and how they should carry themselves, and what should happen; and how every thing should turn out at last: he laid the whole plan with a view to those excellent ends his eye was upon. It was wisely contrived, and, when it came to be acted over, his infinite wisdom was discovered.

By his infinite understanding, he is perfectly acquainted with himself, and with all his intelligent creatures; and so perfectly knows what conduct in him towards them is right, fit, and amiable, and such as becomes such a one as he *is*; and also perfectly knows what conduct in his creatures towards him, and towards each other, is fit and amiable, and so their duty. He sees what is right, and infinitely loves it, because it is right. He sees what is wrong, and infinitely hates it, because it is wrong; and, in his whole conduct, as Governor of the world, he appears to be just what he is at heart—an infinite friend to right, and an infinite enemy to wrong.

He takes *state;* sets up himself as a God; bids all the world adore him, love, and obey him, with all their hearts; and that upon pain of eternal damnation, in case of the least defect; and promises eternal life and glory, in case of perfect obedience. This is the language of his law, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself: Do this, and live; disobey, and die.* And now *all* that infinite esteem for himself, and infinite regard for his own honour, which he herein manifests, does not result from a proud or a selfish spirit; for there is no such thing in his nature: nor does he threaten damnation for sin, because it hurts him; or promise eternal life to obedience, because it does him any good: for he is infinitely above us, and absolutely independent of us, and cannot receive advantage or disadvantage from us. *Job* xxii. 2, 3. and xxxv. 6, 7. But it results from the infinite holiness of his nature. He loves and honours himself as he does, because since he is what he is, it is right and fit he should. He bids the world adore, love and obey him with all their hearts, because, considering what he is, and what they are, it is infinitely fit and right. He commands us to love our neighbour as ourselves, because this also, in the nature of things, is right. And while he promises eternal life to the obedient, and threatens eternal damnation to the disobedient, he shows how infinitely he loves righteousness, and hates iniquity. His promising eternal life and glory to perfect obedience, does indeed manifest the infinite goodness and bountifulness of his nature; but then his promising *all*,

under the notion of a *reward*, discovers this temper of his heart; *his infinite love to right.*

As to all his positive injunctions, they are evidently designed to promote a conformity to the moral law. And as to the moral law, it is originally founded upon the very reason and nature of things. The duties required therein, are required originally, because they are right in themselves. And the sins forbidden, are forbidden originally, because they are unfit and wrong in themselves. The intrinsic fitness of the things required, and the intrinsic unfitness of the things forbidden, was the original ground, reason and foundation of his law. Thus, he bids all the world love him with all their hearts, because he is the Lord their God; and love one another as brethren, because they are all children of the same common father, having the same nature. He requires this supreme love to himself, and this mutual love among his subjects, because it is right that so it should be; and because he perfectly loves that the thing that is right should be done: and not from any advantage that can possibly accrue unto him from the behaviour of his creatures. And he forbids the contrary, because it is wrong, and therefore infinitely hateful in his sight; and not because it could be any disadvantage to him. All the glory and blessedness which he bestows upon the angels in heaven, under the notion of a *reward* to their *obedience*, is not because their obedience does him any good, for it does not; nor because they deserve any thing from his hands, for they do not: (*Rom.* xi. 35, 36.) but merely because it is *right* that they should in all things obey him. This is what he loves, and what he delights to honour. And all the infinite, eternal glories of heaven can but just serve as a sufficient testimony of his approbation. So, on the other hand, it was not in a passion, or from sudden rash revenge, (which many times influences sinful men to cruel and barbarous deeds,) that he turned those that sinned down to hell; and, for their first offence, doomed them to everlasting wo, without the least hope; for there is no such thing in his nature. As he is not capable of being injured, as we are, so neither is he capable of such anger as we feel. No: the thing they did was in itself infinitely wrong, and that was the

true and only cause of his infinite displeasure; which infinite displeasure he meant to declare and make known in the sight of all worlds, throughout the endless ages of eternity, by rendering to them according to their deserts: for he loves to appear as great an enemy to sin in his conduct, as he is in his heart. He loves to act out his heart, and exhibit a true image of himself. His infinite love of righteousness, and hatred of iniquity, is also displayed in his promising eternal life and blessedness to *Adam* and to all his race, a whole world of beings, as a *reward* to the obedience of *Adam*—by him constituted public head and representative, on the one hand; and threatening eternal destruction to him and all his race, a whole world of beings, in case of the least transgression, on the other hand. But his infinite love to righteousness, and hatred of iniquity, is manifested in the greatest perfection, in the death of Jesus Christ, his only-begotten son: But of this more afterwards. In a word, all the blessings which he has granted to the godly in this world as rewards of their virtue; to *Abel*, *Enoch* and *Noah*, to *Lot*, to *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, &c. and all the judgments which he has executed upon the wicked; his turning *Adam* out of paradise; drowning the old world; burning *Sodom*, &c. together with all the evils which befell the children of *Israel*, in the wilderness; in the time of the judges; in the reigns of their kings; and their long captivity in *Babylon*, &c. have all been public testimonies that the righteous Lord loveth righteousness, and hateth iniquity. And, in heaven and in hell, he designs to display, to all eternity, in the most glorious and dreadful manner, how infinitely he loves righteousness and hates iniquity.

Now when true believers, who are divinely enlightened, meditate on and view the laws, the conduct, and the declared designs of the great Governor of the world, they love, admire, and adore, and say, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, the whole world is full of thy glory.* This divine disposition, to love righteousness and hate iniquity, which the great Governor of the world thus discovers in all his government, appears infinitely beautiful and glorious, excellent, and amiable in their eyes: Whence they are ready to say, *Who is like unto*

thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness, &c. As they do in *Exod.* xv. 11*.

* If we should suppose, (as some do,) that there is nothing *right* or *wrong* antecedent to a consideration of the *positive will* and *law* of God, the great governor of the world; and that *right* and *wrong* result, originally, from his *sovereign will* and *absolute authority* entirely, then these absurdities would unavoidably follow:

1. *That the moral perfections of God are empty names, without any signification at all.* For if there be no intrinsic moral fitness and unfitness in things, no right nor wrong, then there is no such thing as *moral beauty* or *moral deformity;* and so, no foundation, in the nature of things, for any *moral propensity;* i. e. there is nothing for God to love or hate, considered as a *moral agent.* There can be no inclination or disposition in him to love right and hate wrong, if there be no such thing as right or wrong. So that the only idea we could frame of God, would be that of an almighty despotic sovereign, who makes his own will his only rule, without any regard to right or wrong, good or evil, just or unjust; an idea of the infinitely glorious and ever-blessed God, evidently as contrary to truth as can be devised.

2. *That, in the nature of things, there is no more reason to love and obey God than there is to hate and disobey him:* there being, in the nature of things, no right nor wrong. Just as if God was not infinitely worthy of our highest esteem and most perfect obedience! and just as if, in the nature of things, there was no reason why we should love and obey him, but merely because he is the greatest and strongest, and says we *must!* than which nothing can be more evidently absurd. But if these things are so, then it will follow,

3. *That there is no reason why he should require his creatures to love and obey him, or forbid the contrary; or why he should reward the one, or punish the other:* there being, in the nature of things, no right nor wrong: and so the foundation of God's law and government is overturned, and all religion torn up by the roots; and nothing is left but arbitrary tyranny and servile subjection; all expressly contrary to *Gen.* xviii. 25. *Heb.* i. 9. *Eph.* vi. 1 *Rom.* xii. 1. *Rev.* iv. 11. *Rom.* vii. 12. *Rom.* ii. 4, 5, 6. *Rev.* xix. 1, 6. *Ezek.* xviii. 25.

Or again, if we should suppose, (as others do,) that there is nothing *right* or *wrong* antecedent to a consideration of the general good of the whole system of intelligent created beings; and that *right* and *wrong* result originally and entirely, from the natural tendency of things to promote, or hinder the general good of the whole: then also, these manifest absurdities will unavoidably follow:

1. *That the moral perfections of God entirely consist in, or result from, a disposition to love his creatures supremely, and seek their happiness as his only end:* just as if it became the most high to make a God of his creatures, and himself their servant! expressly contrary to *Rom.* xi. 36. *Numb.* xiv. *Rev.* iv. 11.

(5.) *His impartial justice* is also discovered in his moral government of the world. He appears, in his public conduct, as one infinitely engaged to give every one his due, and as one absolutely governed by a spirit of the most perfectly disinterested impartiality: He appears as one infinitely engaged to maintain the rights of the Godhead, and to secure that glory to the divine Being that is his proper due; and that by the law which he has established, in heaven and on earth, binding all to love, worship, and obey him, as GOD, upon pain of eternal damnation: And so, again, he appears as one infinitely engaged to secure all his subjects here upon earth in a quiet and peaceable possession of their own proper rights; and that by strictly enjoining every one to love his neighbour as himself, and always do as he would be done by, and that upon pain of eternal damnation. *Gal.* iii. 10. *Deut.* xxvii. 26. And he appears as one governed by a spirit of the most perfectly disinterested impartiality, in that he spared not the angels that sin-

2. *That God loves virtue and rewards it, merely because it tends to make his creatures happy; and hates vice and punishes it, merely because it tends to make his creatures miserable:* just as if he had no regard to the rights of the Godhead, nor cared how much contempt was cast upon the glorious majesty of Heaven! expressly contrary to *Exod.* xxxii. *Numb.* xiv. 1 *Sam.* ii. 29, 30. 2 *Sam.* xii. 10. 14. *Psalm* li. 4.

3. *That he requires us to love and obey him, merely because it tends to make us happy, and forbids the contrary merely because it tends to make us miserable:* just as if he had no sense of the infinite glory and excellency of his nature, and our infinite obligations to love and obey him thence arising! and just as if he thought it no crime in us, to treat him with the greatest contempt! and just as if nothing could raise his resentment but merely the injury done to ourselves! expressly contrary to *Numb.* xiv. 2 *Sam.* xii. 10. 14, &c.

4. *That we are under no obligations to love God, but merely because it tends to make us happy; and that it is no crime to hate and blaspheme God, but merely because it tends to make us miserable.* But if so, then the misery which naturally results from hating and blaspheming God, is exactly equal to the crime; and therefore no positive inflicted punishment is deserved in this world, or in that which is to come. And, therefore, all the punishments which God inflicts upon sinners in this world, and for ever in Hell, are entirely undeserved: and so his law and government, instead of being holy, just, and good, are infinitely unreasonable, tyrannical and cruel.—To say, that God punishes some of his sinful creatures, merely to keep others in awe, when as they do not, in the least, deserve any punishment, is

ned, who were some of the noblest of all his creatures; and in that he is determined not to spare impenitent sinners at the day of judgment, though they cry ever so earnestly for mercy; but, above all, in that he spared not his only-begotten SON, when he stood in the room of sinners. If ever any poor, guilty wretch, round the world, feels tempted to think that God is cruel for damning sinners, and does not do as he would be done by, if he was in their case, and they in his, let him come away to the cross of Christ, and see God's own Son, his second self, there nailed up, naked, bleeding, groaning, dying, in the greatest possible contempt, ignominy, and shame, before ten thousand insulting, blood-thirsty spectators; and let him know that this Jesus is GOD; a person of infinitely greater dignity and worth than all creatures in heaven and earth put together, and infinitely dearer to the great Governor of the world, even just as dear as his own self, and upon whom he would not lay these sufferings any sooner than upon himself; I say, let him stand, and look, and gaze, and learn that God

to suppose the great Governor of the world to do evil, that good may come: and yet, at the same time, to take the most direct course to render himself odious throughout all his dominions. It is impossible to account for the punishments which God has inflicted upon sinners in this world, and designs to inflict upon them for ever in hell, without supposing that there is an infinite evil in sin, over and above what results from its natural tendency to make us miserable: and that, therefore, we are under infinite obligations to love and obey God, antecedent to any consideration of its tendency to make us happy.

From all which, it is evident, to demonstration, that right and wrong do neither result from the mere will and law of God, nor from any tendency of things to promote or hinder the happiness of God's creatures. It remains, therefore, that there is an intrinsic moral fitness and unfitness, absolutely in things themselves: as that we should love the infinitely glorious God, is, in the nature of things, infinitely fit and right: and to hate and blaspheme him, is, in the nature of things, infinitely unfit and wrong: and that, antecedent to any consideration of advantage or disadvantage, reward or punishment, or even of the will or law of God. And hence it is that God infinitely loves right, and hates wrong, and appears so infinitely engaged to reward the one and punish the other. And hence, his law and government are holy, just, and good—they are glorious; and in and by them the infinite glory of the divine nature shines forth. *Isa.* vi. 3. *Rev.* iv. 8. *Rev.* xix. 1—6.

does exactly as he would be done by, when he damns sinners to all eternity, were he in their case, and they in his, (if I may so say, when speaking of the most high God,) since that for his own Son, a person of infinite dignity, to suffer all these things, is equivalent to the eternal torments of finite creatures. Indeed, it was not because he was not a Being of infinite goodness, that he treated his own Son so; nor is it because he has no regard to his creatures' happiness, that he designs to damn the finally impenitent; but it is merely because sin is an infinite evil, and, according to strict justice, worthy of an infinite punishment. It is right and fit that he should do as he does, and therefore his conduct will for ever appear infinitely glorious and beautiful in the eyes of all holy beings. Psalm xcvi. 11, 12, 13. *Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad: let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the fields be joyful, and all that is therein: Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord: For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness and the people with his truth.* See also *Rev.* xix. 1—6.

(6.) *His infinite goodness* is also discovered in his government of the world; for all the laws of this great and good Governor are suited in their own nature to advance all his subjects to the highest perfection they are capable of. His law teaches us to view all things just as they are, and to have our will and affections entirely governed by the truth; by the very reason and nature of things: and so to be according to the measure of such finite creatures, in our wills and in the temper of our minds, after the image of the blessed and glorious God, which is the highest dignity and perfection we are possibly capable of. When God commands us to be holy as he is holy, he enjoins that as our duty, which at the same time is our highest possible privilege. He bids us be like the angels, and begin our heaven upon earth; yea, even to participate of a glory and blessedness of the same nature with that which he himself enjoys: To behold his glory; to be ravished with his beauty; to esteem him supremely, live to him entirely, and delight in him superlatively, and to become like him in our views of things, and in the temper of our minds, is our highest dignity, glory, and excellency, and our highest

blessedness. And, besides, his laws are still further calculated to promote the welfare of his subjects, in that they are suited to establish universal love, peace, and harmony, throughout all his dominions. *Love thy neighbour as thyself*, is one of the fundamental laws of his kingdom: and were his authority duly regarded, and his laws obeyed, love, and peace, and harmony, with all their happy and blessed effects, would reign through all the earth, as they do in heaven; and paradise would not be confined to Eden, nor to heaven, but be all over the world.

And the wrath of this good Governor is only revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, which are the ruin and debasement of our nature, and the destruction of our peace and happiness. He threatens damnation to his subjects, to keep them from destroying themselves, as well as to deter them from affronting his majesty. All the dreadful threatenings of his law result not only from his holiness and justice, but also from the infinite goodness of his nature; in that hereby his subjects are mercifully forewarned of the evil and bitter consequences of sin, to the end they may avoid it. He is a perfect enemy to hatred and revenge; to cruelty and injustice: He cannot bear to see the widow or fatherless oppressed, or the poor despised, or the miserable insulted, or any evil thing done among his subjects: And therefore this good Governor has threatened tribulation and anguish, indignation and wrath, against every soul that doth evil; and, with all his authority, has commanded his subjects, through all this world, upon pain of eternal damnation, to do as they would be done by.

And then, still further to engage his subjects to that in which their greatest glory and blessedness consists, he, in his law, promises eternal life to the obedient: wherein the infinite bountifulness of his nature, as well as his unspeakable concern for his creatures' welfare, is discovered.

And if we survey his conduct towards mankind from the beginning, we may, in ten thousand instances, see the infinite goodness of his nature displayed. If we consider what his ways have been toward an apostate world; how he has given his Son to be a Redeemer, and his Spirit to be a Sanctifier; how he has sent all his servants, the prophets, rising early

and sending; and that notwithstanding he knew beforehand what treatment he would meet with from a guilty, ungrateful, God-hating world; how they would murder his Son, resist his spirit, and kill his messengers: if we consider how patient, and forbearing, and long-suffering he has been towards obstinate sinners; how loath to give them over; swearing by himself that he delights not in their death, but rather that they turn and live; even while they have contemned and affronted him in the vilest manner: and if we consider his distinguishing favours towards his elect, and the marvellous things which he has wrought for his church and people; I say, if we consider these things, and, at the same time, look round the world and behold the innumerable common favours strewed abroad among guilty, hell-deserving rebels, we must be forced to own, that he is good to all, and that his tender mercies are over all his works.

His goodness, indeed, is evidently as unbounded as his power. There is no act of kindness, which his omnipotency is able to do, but that there is goodness enough in his heart to prompt him to do it, if, all things considered, it is best to be done. His propensity to do good is fully equal to his ability. All the treasures and good things of this lower world are his, and he gives all to the children of men; and we should have enjoyed all, without the least sorrow intermixed, had not our sin and apostacy made it necessary for him to give some testimony of his displeasure; and yet, even the calamities of life are well adapted, in our present state, to do us good. All the treasures and glories of heaven are his, and he offers all to a guilty world, and actually gives all to such as are willing to accept of all, through the Mediator, in the way prescribed; and what can he give more? Can he give his only begotten Son to die for sinners? Behold, he has a heart to do it! Can he give his Holy Spirit to recover poor sinners to God? Behold, he has a heart to do it! is as ready to give his Holy Spirit to them that ask, as parents are to give bread to their children! And, finally, can he, in any sense, give himself to his creatures? Behold, he is willing to do so; to be their God, and father, and portion, and be all things to them, and do all things for them, if they will but accept of him through

Jesus Christ! So that, as I said, his propensity to do good is fully equal to his ability: and there is no doubt but that he does show all these kindnesses to his intelligent creatures, which, all things considered, are best should be shown. And his understanding is infinite, whereby he is able to determine exactly what is best in the whole. *Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.* Psalm xxxvi. 5. 7.

And such is the goodness of his nature, and so much goodness has he in his heart, that he needs no motive to excite him to do good; *i. e.* nothing from without. Thus unmoved and unexcited by any thing from without himself, of his own mere goodness, he did, in the days of eternity, determine to do all that good, which ever will by him be done, to all eternity, when there was nothing existing but himself, and so nothing to move him but his own good pleasure: Yea, such is the goodness of his nature, that he not only needs no motive from without to excite him to do good, but even then, when there are all things to the contrary; even every thing in his creatures to render them ill-deserving, and to discourage and hinder his showing mercy, and to provoke him to wrath; even then, when discouragements are infinitely great, and provocations are innumerable; yea, when there is nothing in his creature but what is of the nature of a provocation; even, in such a case, he can show mercy; yea, the greatest of mercies. He can give his Son to die for such, and his holy spirit to sanctify them, and himself at last to be their God and father, and everlasting portion. Such is the incomparable goodness of his nature. *Who is a God like unto thee!* &c. *Mic.* vii. 18, 19. But then he is at liberty in such cases, and may act according to his own discretion, and have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and have compassion on whom he will have compassion; and truly, it is infinitely fit he should. To act sovereignly, in such cases, is infinitely becoming; and, indeed, and it is fit he should dispense all his favours according to his sovereign pleasure. It is fit he should do what he will with his own.

and sending; and that no[illegible] goodness, and it is hand what treatment h[illegible], and act according to grateful, God-hating [illegible] counsel of his own will. resist his spirit, and [illegible] therefore he actually does so; patient, and forbe[illegible] angels that sinned, and pitied wards obstinate si[illegible] the rest of the world, and chose by himself that [illegible] suffers thousands of sinners to go on they turn and [illegible] and in the mean time, seizes here and affronted hir[illegible] all-conquering grace, and effectually saves distinguishi[illegible] according to his sovereign pleasure, because it things wh[illegible] his sight so to do. And the reason why he say, if [illegible] because in the nature of things, it is fit he round [illegible] his sovereignty is a holy and a glorious strewe[illegible] Hence, when Moses desired to see *his glory*, he must [illegible] unto him; *Exod.* xxxiii. 12. And because tend[illegible] saw how fit and becoming, it was for God to act [illegible] in bestowing his favours; therefore he saw a [illegible] in his sovereignty, and so rejoiced in it; *Matt.* xi. 25, [illegible] And sovereign grace is glorious grace in the eyes of every one who views things aright, and has a right frame of heart. Considering that *all* God has is *his own*; that he knows infinitely the best what to do *with what he has*; that there can be *no motive from without* to excite him to act, it is infinitely fit he should be left to himself, to act according to his own discretion; and it is infinite imprudence for a worm of the dust to intermeddle or go about to direct the almighty and infinitely wise God; and it is infinite wickedness to dislike his conduct, and find fault with his dispensations.

Indeed, if there was nothing of greater worth and importance than the happiness of his creatures and subjects, and so nothing that he ought to have a greater regard to, and concern for, then it is not to be supposed that any of his creatures and subjects will be finally miserable. The infinitely good Governor of the world has a great regard to the happiness of his subjects: their welfare is very dear to him, and their misery, in itself, or for its own sake, very undesirable in his sight; yet he has so much greater regard to something else, that, in some instances he actually does suffer sinners to go on in their sins and perish for ever: yea, he will inflict the

ernal torments of of hell upon them. The goodness of God is a holy, wise, and rational goodness, and not an unreasonable fondness; he will never do a wrong thing, to oblige any of his creatures: no, he had rather the whole world should be damned; yea, that even his own Son should die: nor will he ever communicate good to any one, when, all things considered, it is not best and wisest. When he first designed to create the world, and first laid out his whole scheme of government, as it was easy for him to have determined, that neither angels nor men should ever sin, and that misery should never be heard of in all his dominions, so he could easily have prevented both sin and misery. Why did he not? Surely, not for want of goodness in his nature; for that is infinite: not from any thing like cruelty; for there is no such thing in him: not for want of a suitable regard to the happiness of his creatures; for that he always has: But it was because, in his infinite wisdom, he did not think it best in the whole. It was not because he had not sufficient power to preserve angels and men all holy and happy; for it is certain he had: it was not because preventing grace would have been inconsistent with their being free agents; for it would not: it was not because he did not thoroughly consider and weigh the thing with all its consequences; for it is certain he did: But, upon the whole, all things considered, he judged it best to permit the angels to sin and man to fall; and so let misery enter into his dominions. It did not come to pass accidentally and unawares, and contrary to what God had ever thought of or intended; because it is certain that he knew all things from the beginning; and it is certain that, in an affair of such a nature, and of such consequence, he could not stand by as an idle unconcerned spectator, that cares not which way things go. There is no doubt, therefore, but that, all things considered, he thought it best to permit things to come to pass just as they did: and, if he thought it best, it was best; for his understanding is infinite, his wisdom unerring, and so he can never be mistaken. But why was it best? What could he have in view preferable to the happiness of his creatures? And if their happiness was to him above all things most dear, how could he bear the thoughts of their ever, any of them, being misera-

ble? Why, it is certain he thought it best; and therefore it is certain he had a view to something else besides merely the happiness of his creatures; to something of greater importance, and more worthy to bear a governing sway in his mind, by which it became him to be above all things influenced, in laying out and contriving how things should proceed and be disposed in the world he designed to create.

But what was that thing which was of greater worth and importance, and so more worthy to bear a governing sway in his mind, and to which he had the greatest regard, making all other things give way to this? what was his *grand end* in creating and governing the world? Why, look; what end he is at last like to obtain, when the whole scheme is finished, and the day of judgment past, and heaven and hell filled with all their proper inhabitants: And what will be the final result? What will he get by all? Why, in all, he will exert and display every one of his perfections to the life, and so, by all, will exhibit a most perfect and exact image of himself. And now, as he is infinitely glorious in being what he is, therefore that scheme of conduct which is perfectly suited to exhibit the most lively and exact image of him, must be infinitely glorious too; and, therefore, this is the greatest and best thing he can aim at in all his works; and this, therefore, ought to be his *last end.* Now, it is evident, that the fall of the angels and of man, together with all those things which have and will come to pass in consequence thereof, and occasioned thereby, from the beginning of the world to the day of judgment, and throughout eternity, will serve to give a much more lively and perfect representation of God, than could possibly have been exhibited, had there never been any sin or misery. The holiness and justice; the goodness, mercy, and grace of God, shine much more brightly: They have been displayed with an astonishing lustre and glory in the death of Christ, and will be displayed for ever in heaven and in hell, as they could not have been, had not sin and misery ever been permitted to enter into God's world. Indeed, if, in the nature of things, it had been wrong for God to have permitted any of his creatures to sin, and then to punish them for it; if God had been bound in duty, or in goodness, to keep them from *sin, or to* save them when they had sinned, then the

case had been otherwise. But since, in the nature of things, it was fit he should be at liberty, and act according to his own discretion; and since the end he had in view was so noble and godlike, his conduct in this affair was infinitely right, fit, and becoming, and so infinitely glorious. Certainly God thought it was so, or he would not have done as he did; and therefore, if we view things as God did, and have a temper and frame of heart like unto his, we shall think so too. And, as I said before, it is horrid pride and impudence for us to pretend to know better than the infinitely wise God, and infinite wickedness for us to pretend to find fault with his conduct. *Rom.* ix. 19—23*. Thus, if he had aimed merely at the happiness of his creatures, he could easily have so ordered that Pharaoh should willingly have let Israel go, and he could have led Israel in less than forty days to the promised land, and put them into an immediate possession: but there was something else which he had a greater regard to; and therefore Pharaoh's heart is hardened, and all his wonders are wrought in the land of Egypt. The tribes of Israel march to the borders of the Red Sea; the sea parts; Israel goes through, but the Egyptians are drowned. And now Israel is tempted and tried, and they sin and rebel, and so are doomed to wander forty years in the wilderness, and to have their carcasses fall there. And why was all this? Why, because his design was to display all his perfections, and fill the whole earth with his glory. *Exod.* ix. 16. *Numb.* xiv. 21. And now, because it is the most noble thing that God can have in view, to act forth all his perfections to the life, and so exhibit the most exact

* Obj.—But surely it could not be consistent with the divine goodness, from all eternity, to decree the everlasting misery of his creatures.

Ans.—God has in fact permitted sin to enter into the world; does in fact permit many to die in their sins; will in fact punish them for ever; and *all* consistent with the infinite goodness of his nature, as every one must acknowledge. And since it is consistent with his goodness to *to do as he does*, it was consistent with his goodness, to determine with himself beforehand to *do so*: What God, *from eternity*, decreed to do, that God, *in time* will do: therefore, if *all* God's *conduct* be holy, just, and good, so also are *all* his *decrees*; unless we can suppose it to be wrong for the infinitely wise God, from all eternity to determine upon a conduct in all respects *right*: than which nothing can be more absurd.

representation of himself in his works; therefore, it is infinitely fit he should make this his last end, and all other things subservient; and his conduct in so doing is infinitely beautiful and glorious. Thus we see how the goodness of God is displayed in his government of the world, and see that it is an unbounded, rich, free goodness; and that all the exercises of it are sovereign, and under the direction of his infinite wisdom: so that God is infinitely glorious on the account of this perfection of his nature. *Exod.* xxxiii. 19. xxxiv. 5, 6, 7. *Rom.* ix. *Eph.* i. 1—12.

(7.) *His unchangeable truth and faithfulness* are also discovered in his government of the world; and that in the fulfilment of his promises, and the execution of his threatenings. Did he promise to be Abraham's God? So he was. Did he promise to give the land of Canaan to his seed for an inheritance? So he did. Did he promise to send his Son into the world, and to set him up a kingdom upon earth? Even so he has done. And he is in like manner true and faithful to all his promises which he has made to his people. And did he threaten to drown the old world; to make Israel wander forty pears in the wilderness; to deliver them into the hands of their enemies, at what time soever they should forsake him, and go and serve other gods, and, finally, to send them captives into Babylon for seventy years? Even so he has done. God's word may always be depended upon; for what he designs, that he says; and what he says, that he will do. And this is another of the glorious perfections of his nature.

Thus all the perfections of God are discovered in his government of the world. By his *conduct* we may see what he is, and learn the very temper of his heart. And now, I might go through his other works—his redeeming, justifying, sanctifying sinners, and bringing them to eternal glory at last, and show how his glorious perfections shine forth in them. But I have already hinted at some of these things, and shall have occasion afterwards to view the divine perfections shining forth in these works of God, when I come to consider the nature of the gospel. Sufficient has been said to answer my present purpose; and, therefore, for brevity's sake, I will proceed no further here. Thus, then, we see how the perfections of God are manifested in his *works*.

Secondly. *The same representation is made of God in his* WORD: For these great works of God, his creating, preserving, and governing the world; his redeeming, sanctifying, and saving sinners, are the subject-matter of all the Bible. God, in his works, acts out his perfections, and, in his word, lays the whole before our eyes in writing. Therein he has told us what he has done, and what he intends to do; and so has delineated his glorious perfections in the plainest manner. In his *word*, God has *revealed himself* to the children of men; has manifested and shown what he *is*. But how? Why, by declaring and holding forth his works, as that in which he has exhibited the image of himself. Thus, the scriptures begin with an account of God's creating the world, and go on throughout all the Old Testament, informing how he preserves and governs it: And, then, in the New Testament, we are informed more particularly how he redeems, justifies, sanctifies, and saves sinners. And now, as the actions of a man discover the temper and disposition of his heart, and show what he is, so the works of God, from first to last, all taken together, hold forth an exact representation of himself. If we will begin with God's creating the world, and survey all his conduct in the light of scripture; his conduct towards man before the fall, and after the fall; his conduct towards Abel and Cain, Enoch and Noah, and all the old world; his conduct towards Lot and Sodom; towards Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph; towards the children of Israel, in Egypt, at the Red Sea, in the wilderness, at Sinai, at Masah, at Taberah, &c. and in the times of Joshua, of their Judges, of their Kings, &c. and then come into the New Testament, and survey his conduct with relation to the redemption and salvation of sinners, and then look forward to the great judgment-day, and see his whole scheme finished; see the result, the conclusion, and end of all; look up to heaven and take a view of that world, and look down to hell and survey the state of things there; from the whole we may see *what God is*: for in the whole, God exerts his nature, and, by the whole, God designs to exhibit an exact representation of *himself*. And, then, are our apprehensions of God *right*, and according

representation of himself ... representation which he nitely fit he should ... account him infinitely glo- subservient; and ... love him with all our hearts, and glorious. T... thing which the law of played in his g... unbounded, ri... representation which God has it are sovere... and in his word; and he is *really* dom: so th... what he is, that were not man- perfection ... great depravity, entirely void of *Rom.* ix. ... for *true beauty*, they could not but be (7.) *I*... the divine Being. They would naturally ered in ... heaven, and naturally speak their language, of his ... *the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full* pron... *Isaiah* vi. 3. But such is the vile temper mis... creatures, that they are not only blind to tar... excellency of the divine nature, but are even in a w... contrariety to God in the frame of their h... *Rom.* viii. 7. And hence, the manifestation which ... made of himself, can find no place in their hearts. *John* viii. 37. They cannot attend to things of such a na- ture (*ver.* 43.) because so disagreeable to their taste; for, (*ver.* 47.) *He that is of God, heareth God's word; ye, there- fore, hear them not, because ye are not of God.* It is hard to bring unregenerate men so much as to have right notions of what God is, because he is a Being in his nature so con- trary and disagreeable to them. They do not *like to retain God in their knowledge.* Rom. i. 28. Men had rather that God was another kind of Being, different from what he real- ly is, and more like themselves; one that would suit their temper, and serve their interest: and, therefore, they frame such an one in their own fancy, and then fall down and wor- ship the false image which they have set up. From hence it is, that all those false notions of God have taken their rise, which have always filled the world. But were men brought to have right notions of what God is, and to take in that very representation which he has made of himself, by his works and in his word; yet they would be so far from accounting him infinitely glorious in being what he is, that they would see *no form or comeliness in him wherefore they should desire*

him: but would feel the like malignant spirit towards him as the Jews did towards their prophets, and towards Christ and his apostles, only in a worse degree. The same temper which caused the exercise of such enmity towards their prophets, and towards Christ and his apostles, would have caused as great or greater towards God himself, had they but had right notions of him. And the clearer apprehension a sinner has of God, the more will his enmity exert itself; because a sinful nature and a holy nature are diametrically opposite to each other: and, therefore, the clearest external revelation of God cannot bring sinners to love him. All the world will see just what kind of Being he is at the day of judgment, and that in a very plain and clear manner. But yet they whose nature it is to hate him for being what he is, will hate him still; yea, hate him more than ever: and, therefore, besides the external revelation which God has made of himself, by his works and in his word, there is an absolute necessity that he should internally reveal himself in his glory to the heart of a sinner, in order to beget divine love there. Which brings me to add,

Thirdly. *God reveals his infinite glory in being what he is in the hearts of sinners, by his Holy* SPIRIT. *Matt.* xi. 25. 27. By his works and in his word he has revealed *what he is*, and that in a manner sufficiently plain; even so plainly that there is no need at all of any further objective revelation; and he is really *infinitely glorious* in being what he is. Now, therefore, if we would rightly attend to that revelation which God has made of himself, we could not but have right apprehensions of him; and if we had a good taste for true beauty, we could not but be ravished with his glory; but we are naturally disinclined to right apprehensions of God, and are entirely destitute of a true taste for moral beauty. And hence we may learn what kind of inward illumination we stand in need of from the spirit of God. We do not need the Holy Spirit to reveal any *new truths* concerning God, not already revealed; for the external revelation which he has made of himself, is *sufficiently full*. We do not need to have the Holy Spirit immediately reveal all these truths concerning God *over again* to us, by way of *objective revelation*, or im-

to *truth*, when we take in that very repres[illegible]evelation already has made of himself. And now to acco[illegible](1.) to be effectual-rious in being what he is, and to *lo*[illegible]ations which he has because he is what he is, and to v[illegible]*rd*, that we may *see what* God requires.

[illegible] taste imparted to us, by

And, indeed, so plain is t[illegible] Holy Ghost, that we may made of himself, by his w[illegible] *in being such.* For these two so infinitely glorious in[illegible] in our hearts for that *love* kind, through their ex[illegible] by the common influences of the a right *taste*, and r[illegible] to a realizing sight and sense of even ravished wit[illegible] special and sanctifying influences feel as they do [illegible] receive a sense of his infinite *glory* in *Holy, holy h*[illegible] the sense of his *glory* will naturally *of his glo*[illegible] clearly what God *is;* for a sense of the of sinful [illegible] the divine nature fixes our thoughts on the mo[illegible] our thoughts are fixed, the more distinct-stated[illegible] is. And while we see him to be what he hea[illegible] infinite glory in being such, hereby a divine G[illegible] enkindled in our hearts. And thus, *He that J*[illegible] *the light to shine out of darkness, shines in our* [illegible] *gives us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God.* And so *we all, with open face, behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same image.* 2 Cor. iii. 18. iv. 6. A sight of the moral excellency of the divine nature makes God appear infinitely glorious in every respect. Those things in God, which before appeared exceeding dreadful, now appear unspeakably glorious. His sovereignty appears glorious, because now we see he is fit to be a sovereign, and that it is fit and right he should do what he will with his own. His justice appears glorious, because now we see the infinite evil of sin; and a consideration of his infinite understanding and almighty power enhances his glory. And while we view what he is, and see his greatness and glory, and consider his original, entire, underived right to all things, we begin to see why he assumes the character of most high God, supreme Lord, and sovereign Governor of the whole world; and we resign the throne to him, and take our places, and become his willing subjects; and our hearts are framed to love him, and fear him, and trust in him through

Christ; and we give up ourselves to him, to walk in all
, and keep all his commands, seeking his glory. And
ht and sense of the infinite dignity, greatness, glo-
llency of the most high God, lays the first founda-
a divine love. God's being what he is, is the prima-
ason that he requires us to *love him with all our hearts;*
d it is the first motive of a genuine love.

I might now pass on to consider the *additional obligations* we are under to love God; but that it may be profitable to stop a while, and a little consider the nature and properties of this *first and greatest,* and *most fundamental obligation;* and take a view of some *important consequences* necessarily following therefrom. And here,

1. This obligation is binding *antecedently* to any consideration of *advantage* or *disadvantage;* of *rewards* or *punishments;* and even prior to any consideration of *the positive will and law of God himself.*

2. It is *infinitely* binding.

3. It is *eternally* binding.

4. It is *unchangeably* binding.

5. It is that from which all *other* obligations *originally derive* their binding nature.

1. This obligation which we are under to *love God with all our hearts,* resulting from the infinite excellency of the divine nature, is binding *antecedently to any consideration of advantage or disadvantage; of rewards or punishments, or even of the positive will and law of God himself.* To love God with all our hearts, naturally tends to make us happy; and the contrary, to make us miserable; and there are glorious rewards promised on the one hand, and dreadful punishments threatened on the other; and God, as Governor of the world, has, with all his authority, by his law, expressly required us to love him with all our hearts, and forbidden the contrary; and all these things are binding; but yet the infinite excellency of the divine nature lays us under bonds *prior* to any consideration of these things. So that if our interest did not at all lie at stake, and if there had never been any express law in the case, yet it would be right, and our indispensable duty, to love God with all our hearts. His being infinitely

lovely in himself, makes it our duty to love him; for he is in himself worthy of our highest esteem. He deserves it; it is, in the nature of things, his due: and that antecedent to any selfish consideration, or any express law in the case. To suppose the contrary, is to deny the infinite amiableness of the divine nature, and to take away the very foundation of the law itself, and the very reason of all rewards and punishments. For if our supreme love is not due to God, then he is not infinitely lovely; and if he does not deserve to be loved with all our hearts, why does he require it? And if, in the nature of things, it is not right and fit that we should love him, and the contrary unfit and wrong, what grounds are there for rewards or punishments? So that it is evident the infinite excellency of the divine nature binds us, and makes it our duty, antecedent to any consideration of advantage or disadvantage, rewards or punishments, or even of the positive will and law of God, to love God with all our hearts; and therefore our love must primarily take its rise from a sense of this infinite excellency of the divine nature, as has been before observed; and that seeming love, which arises merely from selfish considerations, from the fear of punishment or hope of reward, or because the law requires it, and so it is a duty and must be done, is not genuine; but is a selfish, a mercenary, and a forced thing. How evidently, therefore, do those discover their hypocrisy, who are wont to talk after the following manner: "If I am elected, I shall be saved, let me do what "I will; and if I am not elected, I shall be damned, let me "do what I can: and therefore it is no matter how I live." And again, after this sort: "If I knew certainly that God "had made no promises to the duties of the unregenerate, as "some pretend, I would never do any more in religion." Surely they had as good say that they have no regard at all to the infinite excellency of the divine nature, but are entirely influenced by selfish and mercenary motives in all they do: they do not seem to understand that they are under infinite obligations to love God with all their hearts, and obey him in every thing, resulting from God's being what he is, and that antecedent to all selfish considerations; such know not God; 1 *John* iii. 6.

2. This obligation, resulting from the intrinsic excellency and amiableness of the divine nature, is *infinitely binding*; because this excellency and amiableness is in itself infinite. Our obligation arises from his desert; but he infinitely deserves our love, because he is infinitely lovely. When any person is lovely and honourable, reason teaches us that we ought to love and honour him, and that it is wrong to dislike and despise him. And the more lovely and honourable, the greater is our obligation to love and honour him; and the more aggravatedly vile is it to treat him with contempt. Since, therefore, God is a Being of infinite dignity, greatness, glory, and excellency, hence we are under an infinite obligation to love him with all our hearts; and it is infinitely wrong not to do so. Since he is infinitely worthy to be honoured and obeyed by us, therefore we are under an infinite obligation to honour and obey him; and that with all our heart and soul, and mind, and strength. Hence,

[1.] *Perfect love and perfect obedience deserves no thanks at his hands.* If we perfectly love him, even with all our hearts, and give up ourselves entirely and for ever to him, to do his will and seek his glory, and so cordially delight in him as to take up our full and everlasting contentment in him; yet, in all this, we do but our duty, and we do no more than what we are under an infinite obligation to do; and therefore, we deserve no thanks; *Luke* xvii. 9, 10. Yea, we do nothing but that in which consists our highest perfection, glory, and blessedness; and therefore, instead of deserving thanks, we ought to account it an exceeding great privilege that we *may* thus love the Lord, live to him, and live upon him. *Psalm* xix. 10.

When therefore eternal life was promised in the first covenant as the *reward* of perfect obedience, it was not under the notion of any thing being *merited*; nor did it ever enter into the hearts of the angels in heaven to imagine they merited any thing by all their love and service; for from their very hearts, they all join to say, *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and praise for ever.* And they deserve no thanks for their doing so, for they but own the very truth.

When, therefore, sinful men, poor, hell-deserving creatures,

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think it MUCH that they should love and serve God so well, and take so great pains in religion; and are ready to think that God and man ought highly to value them for their so doing, and are always telling God and man how MIGHTY good they are; as he, *Luke* xviii. 11, 12. *God, I thank thee, I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican;* no, far from this, I am one of the best men in all the world: *I fast twice in the week: I give tythes of all that I possess.* This appeared to him such a MIGHTY thing, that he thought it quite worth while to tell God himself of it. Now, I say, when this is men's temper, it is a sign they neither know God, nor love him; for, if they did, they could not set so *high* a price upon their duties, since he is so infinitely deserving. The plain truth is, such have intolerable mean thoughts of God, and intolerable high thoughts of themselves; they are brim-full of spiritual pride and self-righteousness; and such are exceedingly hateful in the sight of God. They implicitly say that God is not infinitely glorious, and infinitely worthy of all love and honour: he does not deserve it: it is not his due; but rather, he is beholden to his creatures for it, and ought to render them many thanks for their love and service. The language of their hearts is, *God has so little loveliness that it is* MUCH *to love him:* Like a bad mother-in-law, who thinks it nothing to toil for her own children, because she loves them; but grudges every step she takes for the rest, and thinks every little a great deal, because she cares not for them: so, such men think it nothing to rise early and sit up late, to get the world; to get riches, honour, and pleasure; for they love themselves: but think it MUCH to take the tenth part of the pains in religion; because they love not God. Their whole frame of mind casts infinite contempt upon the glorious majesty of heaven, to whom all honour is infinitely due, and in whose service all the hosts of heaven account themselves perfectly blessed. They feel as if they deserved to be paid for all.

True, there are glorious rewards promised in the law and in the gospel: But why? and upon what grounds? A man may be said to be rewarded in three different senses. (1.) *When he receives what he strictly deserves, as an hireling receives his wages at night.* But, in this sense, the angels in heaven are

not capable of a reward: for, in strict justice, they deserve nothing. *Luke* xvii. 9, 10. *Rom.* xi. 35. They are no hirelings, for God has a natural, original, underived right to them, as much as he has to the sun, moon, and stars; and these, therefore, deserve to be paid for their shining, as much as the angels do for their working. Besides, if the angels do love God, it is no more than he infinitely deserves. And further, the services of angels do not profit God, and so lay him under no obligations, any more than the birds profit the rising sun by their morning-songs, and so lay the sun under obligations to shine all day. *Job* xxii. 2, 3. *Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect?* And yet, even in this gross sense, self-righteous persons feel, at heart, as if they deserved a reward for their good duties; though perhaps they are not willing to own it. Hence, they are so apt to think it would be very hard, unjust, and cruel, if God should damn them for their past sins, notwithstanding all their good duties. *Isa.* lviii. 3. *Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not?* But, (2.) A man may be said to be rewarded, when, although, in strict justice, he deserves nothing; yet *he receives great favours at the hands of God, in testimony of the divine approbation of his person and services:* And thus, the angels in heaven, though they deserve nothing, yet have eternal life bestowed upon them, as a reward to their perfect obedience, in testimony of the divine approbation. God rewards them, not because they do him any good, nor because they deserve any thing at his hands; but because he infinitely loves *righteousness*, and to appear as an infinite friend to *this*, in his public conduct, as moral Governor of the world. The most that can be said of the holiest angel in heaven, is, that he is fit to be approved in the sight of God, because he is perfectly such as God requires him to be. And now, because God loves to put honour upon virtue, and to exercise the infinite bountifulness of his nature, therefore he gives them the reward of eternal life. And thus God promises us eternal life, upon condition of perfect obedience, in the first covenant: as if God had said, "If you will love me with all

your heart, and obey me in every thing, as you are bound in duty to do; then, although you will deserve nothing, yet, as becomes a holy and good God, a kind and bountiful Governor, I will make you everlastingly blessed in the enjoyment of myself; and that in testimony of my approbation of your perfect and steady fidelity." And so, by covenant and promise, this reward would have been *due*, had the condition been performed. Hence, that in Rom. iv. 4. *Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of* DEBT. And now here self-righteous persons are wont to come in with their works, and insist upon their right, and plead the reason of things, as well as the promise. "If we do, (say they,) as well as we can, which is all that God does or can in justice require of us, surely he will accept of us: it would be cruel to cast us off: his goodness and faithfulness are engaged for us." Just as if they had now made full amends for all their past sins, by their repentance and reformation; and grown to be as good as angels, by taking some little pains in religion! For the best angel in heaven does not pretend to any other title to blessedness than this; namely, that he has done as well as he can, and that this is all that God has required; and although he is an unprofitable servant, yet he depends upon the promise, the goodness and faithfulness of his bountiful Creator. Indeed, self-righteous persons may *pretend* to expect all *for Christ's sake;* and say, that what they do, only entitles them to an interest in him; but it is all *mere pretence;* for still they think that God is *bound* to give them an interest in Christ and eternal life, *if they do as well as they can;* and would think God dealt very hardly with them, if he did not: so that their real dependance, at bottom, is upon their own goodness, their own worth or worthiness, to make amends for past sins, and recommend them to God, and entitle them to all things; the infinite absurdity of which will be evident presently. Again, (3.) A man may be said to be rewarded, when he neither deserves any thing, nor is it fitting that his person and conduct, considered *merely* as they are in *themselves*, should be approved; but ought to be condemned, according to reason, and according to God's righteous law, they being so sinfully defective; nevertheless, such a man may be said to be rewarded,

when, *merely* on the account of his interest in the *righteousness* and *worthiness* of CHRIST, his person and performances are accepted, and peculiar favours shown him. And in this way are believers accepted, according to the covenant of grace, and entitled to the reward of eternal life: *Phil.* iii. 8, 9. *Eph.* i. 6. 1 *Pet.* ii. 5. Now, those who look for a reward in *this way*, will be so far from thinking it MUCH, which they have done for God, that they will for ever set all down for nothing, and worse than nothing,* their best duties being so sinfully defective; and judge themselves worthy of hell every day, and every moment. And all their dependance will be on Christ's worthiness, and the free grace of God through him: *Luke* xviii. 13. *Rom.* iii. 24. And all that is said in the New Testament about God's rewarding the believer's good works, being viewed in this light, gives not the least countenance to a self-righteous spirit, but militates directly against it. And, indeed, if we were as perfect as the angels in heaven, it appears from what has been said, that we should deserve no thanks. It is impudent, therefore, and wicked; it is contemptuous; and, in a sort, blasphemous, and most God-provoking, for a proud, conceited *Pharisee*, to feel as he does in his self-righteous frames. And God might expostulate with such an one in this manner: "What, is there so little loveliness in me? And is it so great, so hard, so self-denying, to love

* *Worse than nothing.* NOTE. I do not mean, that an imperfect, and very defective conformity to the law is worse, and more odious in God's sight, than no conformity at all; but only, that there is more *odiousness* than *amiableness* in such defective services: and that, therefore, we are, in the sight of God, on their account, more proper objects of hatred and punishment, than of love and reward, if considered merely as in ourselves, without any respect to our relation to Christ: so that, in point of recommending ourselves to God, we do, by our best duties, thus considered, rather discommend ourselves in his sight; and, in this sense, they are worse than nothing: they are even so far from paying our constant dues, that, in the sight of God, they constantly run us into debt. We are infinitely to blame in our best frames and best duties, and have not any thing in them, which tends, in God's sight, in the least degree, to counterbalance our blame. But if any are desirous to see this point fully explained and proved, and all objections answered, I refer them to Mr. *Edwards'* excellent discourse on *justification by faith alone.*

me, that you think it such a *mighty* thing! and expect now, that all past sins shall be forgiven, and my favour secured, for this good frame! yea, and that I shall give you heaven into the bargain! What, are your obligations to me so small, that I must be so much beholden to you for your love! What, did you never hear that I was the Lord! and that it was I that stretched abroad the heavens! and that you are my clay, whom I formed and fashioned for myself? Begone, thou impudent wretch, to hell, thy proper place: thou art a despiser of my glorious majesty, and your frame of spirit savours of blasphemy. Know it, I am not so mean as you imagine, nor at all beholden to you for your love." And this is one reason that the *sacrifice of the wicked* is such an *abomination to the Lord*, not only when they pray with a view to recommend themselves to their fellow-men, but also when, in doing their best, they only design to ingratiate themselves with God. Prov. xxi. 27. *The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination*, (even his very best:) *how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?* The infinite greatness, glory, and excellency of God, and the infinite obligation thence resulting which we are under to love him with all our hearts, and obey him in every thing, renders a self-righteous spirit unspeakably odious, and infinitely provoking in the eyes of a holy God. But this will appear still plainer under the next particular. To proceed, therefore,

[2.] If we are under an infinite obligation to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and take everlasting delight in him, because of his infinite glory and excellency, then *the least disposition* to disesteem him, to be indifferent about his interest and honour, or to disrelish communion with him; or *the least disposition* to love ourselves more than God, and be more concerned about our interest and honour than about his, and to be pleased and delighted in the things of the world, more than in him, *must*, consequently, be *infinitely sinful**, as is self-evident.

* The least sin may be an infinite evil, because of the infinite obligation we are under to do otherwise, and yet all sins not be equally heinous: for there is as great a difference among infinites, as among finites; I mean, among things that are infinite only in one respect: For instance, to be for

When, therefore, the great Governor of the world threatens eternal damnation for the least sin, (as in *Gal.* iii. 10.) he does the thing that is perfectly *right*; for an infinite evil deserves an infinite punishment.

Hence, also, it is no wonder that the holiest saint on earth mourns so bitterly, and loathes and abhors himself so exceedingly for the remaining corruptions of his heart; for, if the least disposition to depart from God and disrelish communion with him, and to be careless about his honour and interest, is infinitely sinful, then the best men that ever lived have infinite reason always to lie as in the dust, and have their hearts broken. Although it be so with them, that all which the world calls *good* and *great*, appears as dross to them; and it is nothing to them to part with friends and estate, honour and ease, and all, for Christ; and although they have actually suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, not worth mourning about, or repining after; yet, notwithstanding all these attainments, attended with the fullest assurance of eternal glory in the world to come, they have infinite reason to do as they do, to dislike themselves, to hate themselves, and lie down in the dust *all in tears*, because still there is such a remaining disposition in their hearts to disesteem the Lord of glory; to neglect his interest, and depart from him; and because they are so far from being what they ought to be, notwithstanding the obligations lying upon them are infinite. Oh! this is infinitely vile and abominable, and they have reason indeed, therefore, always to loathe and abhor themselves, and repent in dust and ashes; yea, they are infinitely to blame for not being more humble and penitent. A sight and sense of these things made Job lie down in the dust, and mourn so bitterly for his impatience under his past afflictions, though he had been the most patient man in the world. *Job* xlii. 5, 6. This made the *Psalmist* call himself a *beast*. *Ps.* lxxiii. 22. And hence, Paul called himself the *chief of sin-*

ever in hell is an infinite evil, in respect of the duration; but yet the damned are not all equally miserable. Some may be an hundred times as miserable as others, in degree; although the misery of all is equal in point of duration.

ters, and cried out, *I am carnal, sold under sin; O wretched man that I am!* and hated to commend himself when the Corinthians drove him to it, and seemed to blush at every sentence, and, in a sort, recalled his words—*I am not a whit behind the very chief of the Apostles, yet I am nothing. I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I.* Such a sight of things kills a self-righteous spirit at root, in the most exalted saint; for he has nothing, (all things considered,) to make a righteousness of, but, in strict justice, merits eternal damnation every hour, and does nothing to make the least amends.

For, if perfect obedience merits no thanks, as was before observed; and if the least sin is an infinite evil, and deserves an infinite punishment, as we have now seen, then a whole eternity of perfect obedience would do just nothing towards making the least amends for the smallest sin; much less will the best services of the highest saint on earth. And, consequently, when Paul came to die, he deserved to be damned, (considered merely as in himself,) as much as when he was a bloody persecutor, breathing out threatenings and slaughter; yea, and a great deal more too: for all his diligence and zeal in the service of Christ did just nothing towards making the least amends for what was past; and his daily short-comings and sinful defects run him daily infinitely more and more into debt, which he did nothing to counterbalance. And hence, Paul accounts himself to be *nothing*, (2 Cor. xii. 11.) as well he might; and all his attainments to be, in a sense, not worth remembering, (*Phil.* iii. 13.) and looks upon himself the *chief of sinners*, (1 *Tim.* i. 15.) and *less than the least of all saints*, (*Eph.* iii. 8.) and durst venture his soul upon nothing but mere free grace through Jesus Christ. *Phil.* iii. 8, 9. And thus it is with every believer, even the most holy, although he daily sees what a God he has sinned against; how he has sinned against him, and does, from a gracious respect to God, mourn for sin, for all sin, as the greatest evil, and sincerely turns from all to the Lord, and gives up himself to God, to love him and live to him for ever; yet he feels that all this makes *no amends* at all for his *sins*, but that he really deserves to be damned for them as much as

ever; yea, he feels that he is infinitely blame-worthy for not being more humble, and penitent, and self-abhorring, and that his desert of damnation is infinitely increasing continually. And hence, he looks upon the grace that saves him as absolutely and divinely free, and infinitely great; and always derives all his hopes of happiness from the free grace of God through Jesus Christ. And this is what the apostle means when he speaks of *his living by the faith of the Son of God*, Gal. ii. 20. *of his rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and having no confidence in the flesh*. Phil. iii. 3. And this was the cause of his so earnestly longing to be *found* not in himself, but in *Christ; not having on his own righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God by faith*. Phil. iii. 8, 9. How directly contrary to all this is the temper of the blind, conceited Pharisee, as expressed by Maimonides, the Jew, who was professedly one of that sect? "Every man," says he, "hath his sins, and every man his merits: and he that hath more merits than sins, is a just man; but he that hath more sins than merits, is a wicked man." And this is the way of such men; they put their sins, as it were, into one scale, and their good duties into the other; and when they fancy their goodness outweighs their badness, then they look upon themselves in the favour of God. But to return:

From what has been said, we may learn, that the *more sensible* any man is of the infinite glory and excellency of God, and of his infinite obligations thence resulting to love God with all his heart, and obey him in every thing, the *clearer* will he see that perfect obedience deserves no thanks, and that the least sin is an infinite evil, and deserves an infinite punishment; and so he will renounce his own righteousness, die to himself, and come down to nothing, more and more; and so will be proportionably more and more sensible of his absolute need of Christ and free grace. And hence, the more holy a man grows, the more humble will he be. And, on the contrary, the *more insensible* a man is of God's infinite glory and excellency, and of his obligations thence resulting, the more will he value his duties, and the less evil will he see in sin, and the less sensible will he be of his ill desert, and of his need of Christ and free grace. And

hence, a self-righteous, impenitent, Christ-despising spirit, reigns in all who *know not God.* And thus we see some of the consequences necessarily following from that infinite obligation to love God with all our hearts, which we are under, resulting from the infinite glory and excellency of the divine nature. But to pass on,

3. This obligation we are under to love God with all our hearts, arising from his infinite glory and excellency, is in the nature of things, *eternally* binding. God, his being, perfections, and glory, will be eternal. God will always be infinitely amiable; always as amiable as he is now; and there will be always, therefore, the *same reason* that he should be loved, for being what he is; even the *very same reason* that there is now: This obligation is therefore perpetually binding amidst all the changes of this life. Whether we are sick or well, in prosperity or in adversity; whether we are raised to honour with David, or live in affluence with Solomon; or whether we are in prison with Joseph, or on the dung-hill with Job, or wandering about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, destitute, afflicted, tormented, with those mentioned in the *eleventh* to the *Hebrews,* still this obligation upon us to love God, is invariably the same. For God is always infinitely amiable in himself; yea, and always will be so, whether we are in the earth, or in heaven, or in hell. And therefore it always is, and always will be, our indispensable duty to love him with all our hearts, let what will become of us, and let our circumstances, as to happiness and misery, be what they may.

Did our obligations to love God arise merely from a consideration of *something else* besides the *eternal excellency* of the divine nature; from something which might altogether *cease* in time, then might it possibly, some time or other, *cease* to be our *duty* to love God with all our hearts. But assuredly it can never *cease,* until God *ceases* to be what he is. The infinite obligation hence arising will be *eternally binding.* Indeed, if all our obligations to love God did arise merely from selfish considerations, then in hell, where these selfish considerations will cease, it would cease to be a duty to love God. If I were obliged to love God, only because he loves me, is kind to me, and designs to make me happy, then,

when he ceases to love me, to be kind to me, and to intend my happiness, all my obligations to him would cease; and it would be no sin not to love him. But now, since our obligations to love God arise originally from his being what he is in himself, antecedent to all selfish considerations; therefore it will for ever remain our duty to love him, let our circumstances, as to happiness or misery, be what they will. And not to love him with all our hearts, will for ever be infinitely wrong. Hence the guilt of the fallen angels has been increasing ever since their first apostacy; and the guilt of all the damned will be increasing to all eternity; and no doubt their punishment will increase in the same proportion. How inconceivably and infinitely dreadful, therefore, will be their case, who are thus continually sinking deeper and deeper in that *bottomless pit* of wo and misery! And indeed, if this be the case, hell may well be compared, as it is in scripture, to a *bottomless pit*. Rev. ix. 1. xx. 1.

4. This obligation which we are under to love God with all our hearts, resulting from the infinite excellency of the divine nature, is also *unchangeably* binding. As unchangeable as the divine nature is; as unalterable as the divine beauty is, even so unchangeable, so unalterable, in the very nature of things, is this our infinite obligation to love him supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively. As God is infinitely lovely in himself, and unchangeably so, so it is self-evident we are under an infinite and invariable obligation to love him with all our hearts. This cannot but be always our duty. So long as God remains what he is, this will remain our duty. It will, in the nature of things, be unalterably right and fit to love him; and not to do so, unalterably unfit and wrong. Our sinking down into ever so bad a temper, and getting to be ever so remote from a disposition to love him, can no more free us from the obligation, than it can cause him to cease being amiable. He must cease to be amiable, before our obligation thence arising can possibly cease to be binding. If there be no alteration in his infinite beauty, there can possibly be no alteration in the infinite obligation thence arising. While God remains what he is, and while our natural powers and faculties are maintained in be-

ing, it must continue our duty to love God with all our hearts, and it cannot but be our duty. In the nature of things it is right; and the obligation is just as incapable of any alteration, as is the equality between twice two and four. The fallen angels are of so bad a temper, that the very thoughts of God will, doubtless, sooner than any thing, stir up all their hatred. But God deserves to be perfectly loved by them, as much as he did before their apostacy. There is a great alteration in the temper of their minds; but not the least shadow of change in the divine beauty. Their having contracted so bad and wicked a temper, cannot surely make it right and lawful for them to indulge it, and continue in it. Their impious revolt surely cannot free them from the authority and government of Almighty God. He deserves their homage and subjection, as much as ever he did. The original ground of *all* still remains; he is still THE LORD. The same may be said of fallen man: it is impossible that our bad temper should free us from our obligation to love God with all our hearts. It is still, in the nature of things, as wrong, not to love God with all our hearts, as ever it was, or as it would have been, had we not joined with the fallen angels, and turned apostates. It must be so, unless our being of so bad and wicked a temper makes it right for us to continue of such a temper, and we not at all blameworthy for acting agreeably thereto; that is, unless our being so very bad and wicked, makes us not at all to blame for our badness and wickedness: and so, according to this rule, the viler any creature grows, and the more averse to God and to all good, the less he is to blame; which is one of the grossest absurdities in the world. Therefore,

(1.) *The divine law which requires us to love God with all our hearts, considered as a rule of duty, is, in the nature of things, unalterable, and absolutely incapable of any abatement, more or less.* The thing required is, in the nature of things, our duty, antecedent to any consideration of an express law in the case; as that children ought to honour their parents, and neighbours do as they would be done by, are things in themselves right, and duties antecedent to any consideration of an express law in the case. *Eph.* vi. 1. These things would have been duties, if there had never been any

laws made concerning them by God or man. Yea, they are, in their own nature, so right, that they cannot but be our duty; and to dishonour our parents, and cheat, and defraud, and injure our neighbour, cannot but be wrong. So, to love God with all our hearts is originally right and fit, and our duty; and would have been so, had there never have been any positive, express law in the case.

Now the grand reason why God, the great Governor of the world, ever made a law requiring us to love him with all our hearts, was because it was thus, in its own nature, so infinitely fit. And now to suppose that he would repeal, or alter, or abate this law, when the grounds and reasons of his first making of it, remain as forcible as ever; when the thing required is as right and fit as ever; and when it becomes him, as Governor of the world, still to require it as much as ever; I say, to suppose such a thing, casts the highest reproach upon all his glorious perfections. It casts the highest reflection upon his infinite *holiness*, whereby he is infinitely inclined to love right and hate wrong; for it supposes him to release his creatures from doing right, and to allow them to do wrong—a little at least. It casts the highest reflection upon his impartial *justice*, whereby he is infinitely inclined to give every one his due; for it supposes him to release his creatures from giving unto God the glory which is his due, and to allow them to keep back part at least. It casts the highest reflection upon his *stability* and *truth*; for it supposes him to alter his law when there is no reason for it: yea, it reflects even upon his *goodness* itself; for it is so far from being a benefit to his creatures to have this excellent law altered, which is so completely suited to the perfection and happiness of their nature, that it would be one of the greatest and sorest calamities which could happen. Like the altering all the good laws and rules in a family, merely to humour and gratify a rebellious child, who will not be governed. Such a child should be made to conform to the wholesome laws of the family, and not the laws be abated and brought down to a level with his bad temper and perverse humour. And, finally, it casts the highest reflection upon the infinite *wisdom* of the great Governor of the world; for it supposes him to go counter to his own honour

and to the good of his creatures, to counteract all his perfections, and contradict the reason and nature of things; and that merely in condescension unto, and in compliance with the sinful, corrupt taste and inclinations of an apostate, rebellious, God-hating world.

And now, how could the great Governor of the world clear and vindicate the honour of his great name, in making any abatements in this law, which requires us to love him with all our hearts? Would he say that *he had before required more love than was his due?* Surely nothing can be much more blasphemous than to suppose this. Would he say that *he does not deserve so much as he did?* Still it is equally blasphemous to suppose this. Would he say that *less* than is his due is ALL that is his due? But this would be to contradict himself in express terms. Or would he openly profess *to quit his right*, and freely *allow* his creatures to despise him a little, and sin sometimes, in condescension unto and compliance with the corrupt inclinations of their sinful hearts? But this, in the nature of things, would be infinitely wrong and dishonourable. Upon what grounds, then, could the supreme Governor of the world go about to make abatements in a law so holy, just, and good, that only requires us to love him with all our hearts; which, in the nature of things, is so infinitely right and suitable? Or upon what grounds can we possibly desire any abatements to be made, unless we even profess that we do not like the law: that we are averse to loving God with all our hearts; that it is a very tedious, self-denying thing to us, and what we can by no means freely come into; and so, upon this footing, desire some abatements! Or, which is the same thing, honestly own "that we love sin so dearly that God must tolerate us in it, or we cannot approve of his government."

But, indeed, God can as easily cease to be, as go about to license and tolerate the least sin; and he had rather *heaven and earth should pass away*, than that the least *jot or tittle of his law should fail.* Matt. v. 18.

How can any body, therefore, once imagine that Christ came down from heaven and died, to purchase this abatement of the law of God, and procure this lawless liberty for his

rebellious subjects? What! did he desert his Father's interest and honour, and the honour of his law and government, and spill his precious blood, that he might persuade the great Governor of the world to slacken the reigns of government, and give out this impious license to iniquity? Surely to suppose this, is to make Christ a friend to sin, and an enemy to God.

What, then, do *they* mean, who, in their prayers, presume to thank God for the gracious abatements which he has made in his law? And what do ministers mean by telling their people, from the pulpit, that the law is abated, and that *sincere* obedience is ALL that is now required of us? Indeed, if poor secure sinners are made to believe that this was the great business Christ came into the world upon, no wonder if their impious hearts are pleased, and if they seem to love Christ, and prize the gospel, and give thanks to God for this great goodness and condescension; for hereby they are delivered from that strictness in religion which they hate, and a wide door is opened for them to sin without blame. Yea, they have the comfort to think that it is *no sin* not to love God with *all* their heart, with *all* their soul, and with *all* their strength. And, generally, a very little matter in religion, they think, will serve. And now it is good times, and they bless themselves. But, alas! they *feed upon the wind. A deceived heart hath turned them aside.*

But, by the way, to what purpose was it for Christ to die to purchase this abatement? What need was there of it? Or what good could it do? For if the law *really* required *too much*, the Governor of the world was obliged, in justice, to make some abatements. And so, the death of Christ in the case was perfectly needless. And if the law required but *just enough*, the Governor of the world could not in justice make any abatements: And so Christ must have died *in vain*, and totally lost his end.

But, indeed, Christ never came into the world upon this design; as he expressly declares in Mat. v. 17, 18. *Think not that I come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven*

and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. And this is the very thing he condemns the Pharisees for, through all this chapter, that they in effect taught this doctrine, that the law was abated; that they taught that although the law did forbid some external and more gross acts of sin, yet it did not the first stirring of corruption at heart, and some lesser iniquities. For instance, that "they must not commit *murder*; but that it was "no harm to be angry without cause, and speak reproach-"fully, and keep a secret grudge at heart. (*verse* 21—26.) "That they must not commit *adultery*; but that it was no "harm to have secret lascivious thoughts. (*verse* 27—30.) That "they must not be guilty of *perjury*; but that there was no "harm in little petty oaths in common conversation. (*verse* "33—37.) That they must not *hate their friends*; but there "was no harm in hating their enemies;" (*verse* 43—47.) These, and such like allowances, they taught, were made in the law; and so that such things were not sinful. But our Saviour condemns their doctrine, as false and damning; and insists upon it, that the law is not abated, and never shall be; but says it still requires us to be *perfect, as our heavenl Father is perfect*, (verse 48.) and declares, that *if our righteousness exceedeth not the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees*, (who were so much for abating the law,) *we shall never enter into the kingdom of heaven*; (verse 20.) so *far* was our blessed Saviour from any design to abate the holy law of God, or lessen our obligations to a perfect conformity to it. And indeed, if Christ had died, and should die a thousand times, to purchase an abatement of the law, (if it be lawful to make such a supposition,) it would be to no purpose; for it cannot be abated unless God ceases to be what he is. For so long as God is infinitely lovely, we shall *necessarily* be under an infinite obligation to love him with *all* our heart and with *all* our strength; and it will *necessarily* be infinitely wrong not to do so. The truth is, that God's sending his Son into the world to die for the redemption of sinners, instead of freeing us from our original natural obligations to keep the law, binds us more strongly so to do; as we shall afterwards see. Psalm cxix. 160. *Thy word is true from the beginning: And every one*

of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever: (Ver. 128.) *I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right.* (Ver. 144.) *The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting.* (Ver. 152.) *Thou hast founded them for ever.* And therefore, (ver. 160,) *Every one of them will endure for ever*; as if the *Psalmist* had said, "The thing required in thy law is, in its "own nature, right, everlastingly right; and therefore, as "Governor of the world, thou hast by law for ever settled "and established it as duty; by a law never to be altered, "but to endure for ever. And for ever, therefore, will it en- "dure."

OBJ. *But is it fair and just for God to require more of his creatures than they can do?*

ANS. What are we come to, in this apostate world, that we cannot see it to be just and fair, in the great Governor of heaven and earth, the infinitely glorious God, to require us, as his creatures, so much as to love him, with *all* our hearts? What! Is this *too much?* Is this more than he deserves from us? Or does the truth lie here; that we hate him so, that we cannot find it in our hearts to love him; and therefore cry, "He must not insist upon it; or if he does, he deals unjust- "ly; and is very hard with us?" But is not this the very thing those citizens did, who hated their Prince, and sent after him saying, *We will not have this man to reign over us?* Luke xix. 14. These hints may serve as an answer for the present: But of this more hereafter.

But while *some* are pleading, that Christ died to purchase and abatement of the law, *others* carry the point still further, and *say* that Christ died *entirely to disannul it*; and that now it *wholly* ceases to be a rule of life to believers: whereas one great and declared design of Christ coming into the world was to recover his people to a conformity thereto: (*Tit* ii. 11, 12, 13.) Oh how men love their corruptions, and hate God and his holy law, and long to have it cashiered and removed out of the world, that so they may live as they list, and yet escape the reproaches of their consciences here, and eternal punishment hereafter! But GOD *sitteth King for ever*, and will assert the *rights* of his crown, and maintain the honour of his majesty, and the glory of his great name, and

vindicate his injured law; although it be in the eternal damnation of millions of his rebellious subjects: Luke xix. 27. *But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me.* And here by the way, we may see what an aversion men have to right thoughts of God and divine things; and may be convinced of the absolute necessity of a supernatural all-conquering light, to remove these prejudices, and make men see and believe the truth, and love, and cordially embrace it. (*John* viii. 47. 1 *Cor.* ii. 14.) A holy God does not appear infinitely glorious and amiable to an unholy heart; and sinners, not seeing the *grounds* of loving God with all their hearts, do not see the *reason* of the law; they do not see how *holy, just,* and *good* the law is, and the *carnal mind* being *enmity against God,* is, at the same time, enmity against the *law,* which is a transcript of the divine nature. (*Rom.* viii. 7.) And hence, sinners do not love to believe either God or his law to be what they really are. And this temper makes them blind to what the scripture says, and leads them to frame a false image of God, and entertain false notions of his law, that they may have a *God* and a *law* both to their own minds.

And now, as are men's notions of the *law,* such are their notions of *religion;* the essence of which principally consists in a conformity to the law.

Hence, here is *one;* he pleads for great *abatements* in the law, and he contents himself with the mere *form* of religion. He is not unjust, nor an extortioner, nor an adulterer; but much better than some of his neighbours. He prays in his family, goes to public worship, and attends the Sacrament, and thinks himself a very good man; like him in *Luke* xviii. 9, 10, &c. But as for the doctrines relating to our *natural depravity, regeneration, conversion, faith, communion with God,* and *all the inside of religion,* he understands nothing about them; they seem as strange as it did to *Nicodemus* to hear Christ discourse about the *new birth. John* iii. And all the talk about the *inward influences* of the holy Spirit, in awakening, convincing, humbling, and converting a sinner, and in enlightening, teaching, quickening, comforting, and sanctifying a believer, is quite unintelligible; for these things

do not come into his notions of religion. According to his opinion, the law is brought down so low, that it is an easy thing to become a good man. The change is but small, and there is scarce any need of the spirit's help; much less any room for the exercise of sovereign grace; for he is so good-natured, that he can become good of his own free will, (i. e. according to his notions of goodness,) and do that which shall effectually entitle him to the promises: And thus he has the staff in his own hand. And now here is a *charming* religion, perfectly suited to the taste of an apostate world; for it is calculated to quiet the conscience, while the heart lies out estranged from God and dead in sin; *Rom.* vii. 8, 9. Especially, so much of it as is for their credit, and apparently serves their worldly interest, will pretty readily and heartily be fallen in with; and *the best have their failings; no man is perfect;* and *I endeavour to be sincere;* and *the best have their doubts; assurance is not to be attained,* and such like pleas, help to keep their consciences secure. And now, O how they love those ministers, that cry, *peace, peace!* but hate those that would search things to the bottom, and sound an alarm to secure sinners, and delude hypocrites. The same temper that makes them hate God and his law, makes them hate his ministers too. And they are for another kind of God, and for another kind of law; another kind of religion, and another kind of ministers, that they may have all to their mind. And when all is done, they are confident they are now in the right, because they are suited. They love to have it so, and therefore firmly *believe* it is so.

Hence, again, here is *another,* who has been mightily terrified, and in great distress, under a sense of the wrath of God and the dreadfulness of damnation; but, in the distressing hour, he has had it *revealed* to him, (by the spirit of God, he thinks,) that his *sins are forgiven;* and now he is *sure* of heaven, and is ravished at the thoughts of eternal glory: he holds it a great *sin* to *doubt;* and all his religion consists in faith and joy, *i. e.* in believing that his sins are forgiven, and rejoicing in his blessed, and happy, and safe estate, and in the expectation of future glory: But as for a real conformity to the *law,* it makes up no part of his religion. He understands

rightly nothing what the law requires; he is neither sensible of his duty to God, nor to his fellow-men; yea, he hates to hear any thing about *law* or *duty*. It is all *legal*, he cries, *and tends to kill religion, and to wound weak christians, and grieve and drive away the spirit of grace*; and no preaching suits his taste, but what consists in telling over and commending such experiences as his, and in setting forth the love of God and Christ to such, and calling upon such to believe and rejoice, and never doubt their state again. And, in general, those things which tend to strengthen his confidence and increase his joy, he esteems right and good; and all things of a contrary tendency he esteems wrong and bad. This seems to be his only *criterion* of right and wrong, and the only rule he makes use of in drawing up a judgment; but as for the *law*, it is of no use with him. There is doubtless many a man that feels, and acts, and lives, as if the law was abated, who yet will not plead for that doctrine. So, doubtless, there is many a man that feels, and acts, and lives as if the law wholly ceased to be a rule of life, who yet will not venture to say so. The force of education, and their worldly interest and credit keep men many times from showing what they are by an open profession: however, secretly this temper reigns within them; yea, sometimes it breaks out into open light, in their visible conduct.—But as strange as it may seem, there are multitudes that not only have the root of these things in their hearts, but really believe them, and openly profess and plead for them. Hence it is, on the one hand, that the *Arminian*, *Neonomian*, and *Pelagian* errors have taken their rise, and the *Antinomian* on the other. Wrong notions of God lie at the bottom; and then wrong notions of the law; and then wrong notions of religion in general: and all originally proceed and grow up out of the wrong temper of men's minds; for all unregenerate men would fain have a *God*, and a *law*, and a *religion* to suit the temper of their hearts. *Micah* iv. 5. *For all people will walk every one in the name of his God.*

In the mean time, the truly godly man, who sees that the *obligation* which he is under, to love God with all his heart, resulting from the excellency of the divine nature, is *unchangeable*, and that the *law* which requires this is *unalterable*,

instead of going about to contrive a religion that may suit the natural temper of his heart, is convinced that the temper of his heart is the *very* thing that must be changed. He is convinced of his infinite obligation to be altogether such as the *law* requires him to be, and that he is infinitely blameable for the least defect. Hence those words, *The law is holy, just, and good; the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin: O wretched man that I am!* do exactly express the thoughts of the most exalted saint on earth; yea, even of the great St. Paul himself. *Rom.* vii. 12. 14. 24. Indeed, had St. Paul thought that the law was wholly disannulled, or much abated, he might then have imagined that he was so good as to be quite free from sin, or pretty near being so, and been ready to speak the language of the Pharisee—*God, I thank thee, I am not as other men.* But now, notwithstanding all his high and wonderful attainments, yet, when he considered what the *law* was which he was under, and how very far he was from being exactly what that required, the native language of his humble heart is, *I am carnal, sold under sin! O wretched man that I am*!* And now the apostle, from a sense of his infinite obligations to be what the law requires, and of his great distance from this, *forgets the things which are behind;* and he *runs*—he *wrestles*—he *fights*—he *strives*—he *keeps under his body*—he *lays aside every weight:* in short, he appears like a man in a perfect agony; *so great was his sense of duty, and so much had he to do.* And, at the same time, from a sense of his impotency and of his unworthiness, of his need of the Redeemer and the Sanctifier, it is his maxim to *pray always*, and to ask all things *in the name of Christ.* Now, in his example we have the temper which prevails more

* Some have thought that St. *Paul* had arrived so nigh to *perfection*, that he could not speak these words of *himself.* Their mistake seems to arise from their wrong notions of the *law*, to which St. *Paul* compared himself, and according to which he drew up his judgment. And from the same source it seems to be, that they can think those words, (*ver.* 22.) applicable to the unregenerate—*I delight in the law of God after the inward man;* when in truth, the unregenerate are, in their temper, diametrically opposite to the law. *Rom.* viii. 7.

or less in every godly man exactly painted: and thus we have had pictured in miniature three different sorts of religion, arising from three different notions of the law. The *picture* is begun; and, in the sequel, I purpose to paint all three as near to the life as I can, that we may see what they are, and wherein they differ; which is right, and which is wrong. But so much for the first inference, that the *law*, as a *rule of duty*, cannot be *repealed or abated*. And now to proceed,

2. From what has been said, it is evident that *the law, in its threatenings of eternal damnation for the least sin, is equally incapable of any repeal or abatement:* for if our obligation to love God with all our hearts, and obey him in every thing, resulting from the divine perfections, is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable; and if therefore the least sin necessarily be infinitely evil, and deserving of an infinite punishment, and unalterably so, then the law, considered as threatening eternal damnation for the least sin, is, in its own nature, unalterably holy and just; and consequently it cannot be repealed, consistently with the holiness, justice, and honour of the great Governor of the world. If the Governor of the world had, in a *mere arbitrary manner*, made a law that sin should be punished with eternal damnation, then he might, in a *mere arbitrary manner*, have repealed it: but since, in the nature of things, *justice called for it*, that such a law should be made; therefore, so long as the grounds and reasons of the law remain, the law cannot, in *justice*, be repealed.

None can deny but that the great Governor of the world has actually made a law that sin shall be punished with eternal damnation; and none can deny but that this law is to be put in execution, to the full, at and after the great judgment-day: but if *justice had not called for it*, surely the *infinitely good* Governor of the world would never have made such a law, much less would he ever put it in execution: for, to make and execute such a law, *in a merely arbitrary, sovereign manner*, when, in the nature of things, *justice does not call for it*, would be infinitely cruel and tyrannical, and perfectly inconsistent with the divine perfections, as is self-evident. See *Genesis* xviii. 25. and *Ezekiel* xviii. 25.

But then, if the great Governor of the world made this law *not arbitrarily*, but because, in the nature of things, *justice called for it*, then, so long as the reason and ground of the law remain, the law itself cannot, *in justice*, ever be repealed. If justice called for its being made, then it cannot be *unmade*, consistently with justice, so long as the ground and reason of it remain, as is self-evident. But the reason of the law is, in the nature of things *unalterable*: for the reason of the law was the *infinite evil of* sin, whereby it deserved an infinite punishment. As long, therefore, as sin remains an infinite evil, so long must the law stand unrepealed: but sin will always be an infinite evil, so long as we are under infinite obligations to love God with all our hearts, and obey him in every thing, which we shall always be, so long as God remains infinitely glorious and amiable, and this will be for ever; therefore, this law can *never* possibly, consistently with divine *justice*, be repealed.

For any, therefore, to desire to have it repealed, is to turn enemy to the holiness, and justice, and honour of the supreme Ruler of the world, as well as to his law and government; and argues that they have no regard to the rectitude and fitness of things, but only to *self-interest*; as those among men are real enemies to the civil government who desire the good and wholesome laws thereof to be repealed. And it is upon this ground that St. Paul concludes *carnal* men to be at *enmity against* GOD, because they are enemies to his LAW. (*Rom.* viii. 7.) For if men loved God, they would be disposed to love his law and government, which express his nature.

To suppose, therefore, that the Son of God came into the world and died, that the law, in its *threatenings*, might be *repealed*, is to suppose that he also is turned an enemy to God; to his holiness and justice; to his law and government; and that he is properly gone over to be on the side of his father's rebellious subjects.

Besides, to what purpose would it have been, (on the hypothesis of these men,) for Christ to have died, that the law, in its threatenings, might be repealed? What need was there of it? or what good would it have done? For if, in *justice*,

it ought to have been repealed, there was no need of his dying to procure this; or if, in *justice*, it ought *not* to be repealed, then his dying could not procure it, and so would do no good. The righteous Governor of the world would have repealed it of his own accord, if it had been right and fit so to do; and if, in the nature of things, it was not right, then not any thing whatever could persuade him to do it.

But the truth is, Christ came into the world, and died *to answer all the demands of the law*: that so, although the sinner be saved, yet the law might never be repealed, but be firmly established: for the Governor of heaven and earth was utterly against the law being repealed, as a thing in itself infinitely unreasonable. And therefore the apostle says, *Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid! yea, we establish the law.* Rom. iii. 31. And indeed it was nothing but God's infinite aversion to repeal the law, as a thing in itself infinitely unfit and wrong, that was the thing which made the death of Christ needful: for, if the law might have been repealed, sinners might have been saved without any more ado; but, if it could not, and must not be repealed, then the demands of it must be answered by some means or other, or every sinner damned. And now Christ stepped in and did this, and so secured the honour of God's holiness and justice, law and government, and opened a way for the sinner's salvation. And this account of the reason of Christ's death the Scriptures plainly give us. Gal. iii. 10. 13, 14. *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ.* For (Heb. ix. 22.) *without shedding of blood there is no remission*: Therefore, (*Rom.* iii. 25, 26.) Christ was *set forth to be a propitiation for sin; to declare his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.* And hence, (verse 31.) *Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid! yea, we establish the law.*

Yea, the apostle evidently sets out upon this hypothesis, that the law is not repealed, but stands in full force. He lays this down as a *first principle*, in that argumentative discourse

which we have in the three first chapters of his epistle to the *Romans*, chap. i. ver. 18. *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.* And taking this for granted, he goes on to prove, *that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin,* and so *the whole world guilty before God;* to the 19th verse of the 3d chapter. And hence he argues, *that by the deeds of the law no flesh could be justified.* But now, if the law was repealed, the whole world was not guilty before God, nor any one in the world: *For sin is not imputed where there is no law.* Rom. v. 13. And if the law was repealed, what need was there of such a long train of arguments, to prove, that no flesh could be justified by the law? For it would have been enough to have said, that a repealed law could neither justify nor condemn any body. And why does he use such arguments as he does? For thus he reasons, "The law requires perfect obedience as a condition of life, and threatens tribulation and wrath against every soul of man that doth evil. But *Jews* and *Gentiles* have all sinned: therefore are all guilty and condemned according to law; and consequently cannot be cleared and justified by law." For all this reasoning supposes that the law is as much in force as ever it was. And, accordingly, he goes on to show, that the design of Christ's death was to answer the demands of the law, that there might be a way opened for the salvation of sinners, consistent with divine justice, and, at the same time, the law not be made void, but established, as we have before observed. And now this being the case,

Hence, we find the scriptures every where look upon those who have not a special interest in the righteousness of Christ, by faith, as being as much under the wrath of God and curse of the law, as if Christ had never died. John iii. 18. *He that believeth not is condemned already.* Ver. 36. *The wrath of God abideth upon him.* And, Gal. iii. 10. *As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse.* And, Rom. i. 18. *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven, against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.* Thus the wrath of God is revealed against the unbeliever; yea, abides upon him; yea, the law condemns

and curses him. But if the law had been repealed by the death of Christ, all the world would have been freed from the curse: For a repealed law can neither bless the righteous, nor curse the wicked; but stands for nothing.

And hence, also, we find that Christless sinners, when awakened by the Holy Spirit to see and feel what a state they are in, are always convinced that they are under the wrath of God and curse of the law; and hereby are made to understand their need of a Saviour. (*Rom.* iii. 19, 20.) But if the law had been repealed by the death of Christ, this could not be; for they would then have been under no wrath, nor curse; nor would any have ever felt *a spirit of bondage*, as they do in every age of the world, and as they used to do in St. Paul's day. (*Rom.* viii. 15.) For it is the *law* only *that works wrath.* Rom. iv. 15.

And hence we shall find, even all the world shall find, and thousands and thousands to their everlasting sorrow, that when the day of judgment comes, the law shall be executed with the utmost severity upon all that *know not God, and obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ.* (2 Thes. i. 7, 8.) And God's justice, in so doing, will shine bright in the sight of all worlds; for he designs, on that day, to reveal the righteousness of his judgments: and hence it is called *the day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God.* (Rom. ii. 5.) But if the law is repealed by the death of Christ, and if God has told the world that he has repealed it; for him now to revive it, and judge, and condemn the world by it, would be to cast contempt upon the death of Christ, and deceive his poor creatures, and unmercifully and unrighteously judge and condemn them, by a law that was repealed; a law they never were under, and so ought never to have been judged by. From the whole, therefore, it is evident, that the law that threatens eternal damnation for the least sin, never has been, and never will be repealed.

Well, then, (if this be the case,) may ministers thunder hell and damnation against a secure, wicked world; and well may poor sinners tremble under a sense of divine wrath, when their eyes begin to be opened to see where they are: for all those comforts that the formalist gets by thinking the

law is abated or disannulled, and so his state safe, are but the result of an erroneous head, and a heart secure in sin. And what has been said under this particular, will rationally account for all the agony and distress of an awakened sinner. When God, the great Governor of the world, the revenger of sin, begins to make the poor sinner remember his ways and his doings which have not been right, and see what a creature he is, and what a condition he is in, and be sensible of what he deserves; and when he comes to understand that his soul is forfeited, and that it is right that justice should take place, and that God is at liberty to do as he pleases, surely this must be heart-rending, soul-distressing, to a poor, sinful, guilty, hell-deserving creature.

And if God will not repeal the law, but still insist upon it, that it is holy and just, no wonder the sinner is made to own it too, before ever he is pardoned: For it would be unbecoming the supreme Lord of the universe, to grant a pardon to a guilty rebel, that is too high-hearted to own that the law, by which he stands condemned, is holy and just. O how right it is, that the sinner should come down, and see, and know, and own for ever, that he is justly condemned, and, as such, apply himself to the sovereign grace of God, through Jesus Christ, for a pardon! And O how sovereign, and free, and divine, is that grace that pardons and saves the poor, sinful, guilty, hell-deserving wretch, through Jesus Christ! (*Rom.* iii. 19. 27.) And thus as God the Father honours the law, by refusing to repeal it, and God the Son by answering its demands; so does God, the Holy Ghost, by making the poor sinner see, and feel, and own, that it is holy and just, before ever he internally reveals the mercy of God, through Jesus Christ, unto him; so that the law is honoured, and sin is embittered, and the sinner humbled, and grace glorified, all at once. As in the external revelation God has made in his word, the law is before the gospel; so it is in internal influences and operations of the Holy Spirit upon the elect; and that for the same reason, that *the law* might be a *school-master to bring men to Christ.*

To conclude: from all that has been said, we may learn what to think of the religion and of the hopes of these two sorts of

ence. (1.) The *legal hypocrite*, who, supposing that the *good old law* is repealed and laid aside, and that a *new law*, only requiring *sincere obedience*, is established in its room, merely from self-love and for self-ends, sets about duty, and endeavours to be sincere; and here on this foundation builds all his hopes of acceptance in the sight of God: for since the law is not repealed, but stands in full force, therefore the religion of such is not *that thing* which God requires or will accept; and their *new law* is a *whim*, and their hopes are all built on the sand: Their whole scheme results from a total ignorance of God, and his law, and the present state of mankind; and is entirely built on falsehood. (2.) The *evangelical hypocrite*—all whose *faith* and *joy* originally result from a supposed discovery of the love of God, or love of Christ, or that his sins are pardoned. This discovery is the foundation of his faith, and his faith is the foundation of his joy and of all his religion: And yet the thing discovered is a lie; for, as has been proved, every one, until he is a believer, until he has acted faith, is not pardoned, but condemned; is not beloved of God, but under his wrath; and, therefore, to have pardon of sin and the love of God discovered before the first act of faith, and to have such a discovery lay the foundation for the first act of faith, and a foundation for all religion, is to be imposed upon with a lie, and to have a gross falsehood lie at the foundation of their faith; their religion, and of all their hopes. The *legal* hypocrite may be convinced by such scriptures as these; *Luke* xviii. 9. 13. *Rom.* iii. 20—31. iv. 5. which prove that a man cannot find acceptance with God by his own righteousness: And the *evangelical* hypocrite may be convinced by such scriptures as these; *John* iii. 18. 36. *Acts* iii. 19. which prove that a sinner is not pardoned till after faith. A true sight and sense of the law would effectually convince the one and the other, that all their hopes are built on wrong apprehensions of things, and that all their religion is counterfeit; and that they are yet in the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity: and the one would no longer venture his soul on his *own righteousness*, nor the other on his *discovery*. The law's insisting upon perfect, sinless obedience, would convince the one that his own righteousness might not be depended

upon; and the law's cursing every unbeliever, would convince the other that his discovery was false; and the law's requiring us to love God primarily for his own beauty, would convince both of their graceless estates, inasmuch as the religion of both primarily takes its rise from self-love. It is from the want of a realizing sight and sense of the nature and extent of the law, and that out of Christ we are exposed to all the curses thereof, that a sinful, guilty world are so insensible of their graceless, and their wretched and miserable condition, and so apt to flatter themselves that they are rich, and increased in goods, and stand in need of nothing. Rom. vii. 8, 9. *Without the law sin was dead. I was alive without the law once.*

Thus we see that the *obligation* which we were under to love God with all our hearts, *resulting from the infinite excellency of the divine nature,* antecedent to all selfish considerations, is *infinitely, eternally,* and *unchangeably* binding: And thus we see a variety of important consequences necessarily following therefrom: and I have insisted the longer upon the nature of this obligation, not only because it is the first and greatest, but because it has a mighty influence in all our *additional* obligations. For,

5. And lastly. *It is from the infinite excellency of the divine nature, that all our additional obligations originally derive their strength, their energy, their binding power.* The infinite excellency of the divine nature so entirely lays the foundation of its being our duty to love God with all our hearts, that were it not for this, it would cease to be our duty, notwithstanding all other considerations. If he were not, by nature, GOD, it would not be fit that we should love and worship him as God, upon any account whatsoever: He could have no such right to us, or authority over us, as to make it our duty; nor could he render it our duty, by showing us any kindness whatsoever: Yea, if he were not, by nature, GOD, it would be *wrong* for us to pay him *divine* adoration; it would be *idolatry;* it would be worshipping one *as God,* who, by nature, is *not God:* And by the same argument which the *orthodox* have been wont to use against the *Arians,* who deny the divinity of Christ. *If he be not a divine person, he ought*

not to have divine worship paid him; I say, by the same argument, if God were not, by nature, GOD, it could not, upon any account, be our duty to love and worship him as *God*. It is his being, by nature, GOD; his being what he is, and his infinite excellency in being such, which therefore lays the original foundation of all our obligations, and which gives life and energy to all. And, accordingly, we may observe, that the original ground and reason upon which God, as Governor of the world, acts, in making a law that we should *love him with all our hearts*, is, because he is *the Lord;* as is evident from the tenour of the law itself: *Thou shalt love the* LORD, &c. *i. e.* because he is the LORD, &c. Yea, it is upon this ground, originally, that God takes it upon him to give all his laws to us; for this is the constant style—*Thus and thus shall ye do,* FOR I AM THE LORD.

Those, therefore, who are influenced to love and worship God *not at all*, because he is GOD, but *altogether* from other considerations; not *at all* from a sense of his infinite excellency, but *altogether* on other accounts, are so far from being truly religious, that they are, indeed, guilty of great wickedness in all they do: for although they pretend to love and worship God, yet it is not at all because he is God; though they pretend to pay divine adoration to him, yet it is not at all because he is a divine Being: so that when they pretend to pay divine worship and adoration to God, it is merely from some selfish consideration; from self-love, and for self-ends; there is no true regard to God, but all centers in *self:* so that *self*, indeed, is their *idol*, and the only *God* they serve; and their pretending to love and worship God is mere *mockery*. When they pretend to love and worship God, it is not at all because he is God; not at all from a sense of his divine glory, but only to appease his anger and obtain his favour, or because they consider him as their friend and benefactor. And now, to come to God and pretend to worship him as if he was God, and yet not to do it at all because he is God, but for mean, and mercenary, and selfish ends, is a very complicated wickedness; and to think to please God in this way, and get into favour by this means, discovers such ignorance and contempt of God, and a frame of heart so

full of secret blasphemy, spiritual idolatry, pride, and hypocrisy, as cannot easily be expressed: They practically deny his divinity, yet pretend to pay him divine worship: They pretend to serve God, yet really intend only to serve themselves: They make as if they loved God, but only love themselves. Yet so intolerably mean are their thoughts of God, that they expect to please him by all this. To make the best of it, all that religion is mere hypocrisy, which does not primarily take its rise from a sense of the infinite excellency of the divine nature.

Thus, then, we see what is the *first* and *chief motive* of a genuine love to God. He is a Being of infinite understanding, and of almighty power; infinite in wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth: and so a Being of infinite glory and excellency: and so infinitely amiable, and infinitely worthy to be loved with all our hearts. And this obligation is binding originally in itself, antecedent to a consideration of any other motive whatsoever: and it is infinitely, eternally, and unchangeably binding, and gives life, and energy, and strength to all other obligations. And hence, if we do love God with all our hearts, we do but our duty, and deserve no thanks; but we are infinitely to blame for the least defect, and can never do any thing to atone for it, but deserve everlasting damnation. And it will always be our duty thus to love God, and the least defect will be always thus blame-worthy, let our circumstances, as to happiness or misery, be what they will. All our hearts will be always due to God, and we shall always stand bound to pay this debt, whether we have any heart for it or no: and God will always appear such an infinite enemy to the least defect, as in his law he has declared himself to be; nor is there any hope of our finding acceptance in his sight, unless it be by a union to, and interest in, him who has answered all the demands of the law, in the room of those who believe in him. And all pretence of love to God, which does not take its rise from this foundation, is but mere hypocrisy. All these consequences so necessarily follow, from a supposition of the infinite excellency and amiableness of the divine nature, and so evidently, as that, if God be but

seen aright, a sense of his infinite beauty will immediately assure the heart that these things are so. A sense of his infinite glory will make us see and feel that we are under infinite obligations to love him with all our hearts, and that we could deserve no thanks for doing so, but that the least defect infinitely wrong, &c. A sense of the infinite glory of God will effectually establish the heart in these things against all the subtle arguments and fair pretences of heretics. A sense of the infinite glory of God, immediately imparted to the soul by the spirit of God, whereby the heart is thus divinely established in the belief of the truth, is, therefore, that *unction from the holy one*; which all the saints have, whereby they are effectually secured from being finally led away by false teachers; at least, that *unction* consists partly in this, (1 *John* ii. 20—27.) And at the same time that the people of God are thus established in the belief of these truths, relating to law and duty, from a sense of the infinite glory of God: I say, at the same time this sense of the infinite glory of God, begets a disposition in the heart to conform to this law, and do this duty. And thus it is that God *writes his law in our hearts*, and *puts it in our inward parts*, when he intends to *become our God*, and to *make us his people*. (Heb. viii. 10, 11.) And hence it begins to be the *nature* of the people of God, to love him with all their hearts; and their views and their temper, and every thing else being thus entirely *new*, hence they are called *new creatures*. *Old things are passed away, and all things are become new*. But now, this sense of the infinite glory of God, which thus lays the very lowest foundation of true religion, is entirely left out of all false religions. And by *this*, true religion stands distinguished, as something specifically different from all the false religions in the world. And hence we may observe, that it is spoken of in scripture, as something peculiar to true saints, that they *see* God and *know* God. John viii. 19—55. *Ye neither know me, nor my Father*. John xiv. 19. *The world seeth me no more, but ye see me*. 1 John iii. 6. *Whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him*. 1 John ii. 3. *Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments*. 1 John iv. 7, 8. *Every one that loveth, knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God*.

And the unregenerate, not knowing God, not having a sense of his infinite glory to lay the foundation of their love and of their religion, hence all their love and all their religion entirely take their rise from mere selfish considerations, and nothing but self-love lies at bottom. And hence it is natural for unregenerate men to think they deserve something for their duties, and as natural to be insensible of the infinite evil of their sins. And so it is their nature to magnify and be proud of their own goodness, and to extenuate and be unhumbled for their badness. And from hence results our native aversion to *faith* and *repentance*, and contrariety to the *gospel-way of salvation*. And now *new gospels, new sorts of faith* and *repentance* are coined, *new* notions of religion contrived, to suit the depraved temper and vitiated taste of unhumbled, impenitent sinners, who are concerned to secure their own interest, but care not what becomes of God's honour. Hence errors take their rise, and professing christians are divided into parties, and one runs this way, and another that, and all hope to get to heaven at last. And now, at length, after so great a variety of inferences and remarks, and so large a consideration of the first and chief motive of a genuine love to God, I proceed,

2. To take a short view of *the additional obligations which we lie under*, to love God with all our hearts. I AM THE LORD, (this lays the first foundation, and leads the way, when from *Mount Sinai* the Almighty proclaims his law, but then he immediately goes on to add,) THY GOD, *which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage.* Exod. xx. God has such a right to us, and such an authority over us, and has done so many things for us, and promised so many things to us, that our additional obligations to be the Lord's, to love him and live to him, are exceedingly great. Particularly,

Nothing is more reasonable than that we should be *entirely dedicated* to that God, whose we are *originally*, and by an *entire, underived*, and *unalienable* right: especially, considering what he is in himself, and that he is Lord of all things, and, by nature, God most high: Indeed, if our Creator was not, by nature, the most high God, then he could not be the

supreme Lord of all things; for there would be one above him; and so we should not be his, entirely and absolutely; for he himself, and we his creatures, would belong, originally, to another; even to him that, by nature, would be the most high God; and him we ought to love and worship. But our Creator himself, being absolutely the first, and absolutely supreme, self-existent, and independent, the sole author and Lord of all things, as well as infinitely glorious in himself, his right to us is original, underived, and most absolute and entire: and therefore it is infinitely fit and suitable that we should be, in the constant frame and disposition of our hearts, absolutely, entirely, and wholly the Lord's, and that we should forever exert all our powers, to the very utmost, to promote his honour and interest. And it is infinitely unreasonable that we should ever set up ourselves, and be attached to any interest of our own, separate from his. And, inasmuch as he is infinitely better than we are, (yea, *all the nations of the earth are less than nothing before him,*) and has such an entire right unto us; his interest, therefore, should be regarded as more valuable than our own: yea, infinitely more. For if our own interest appears as valuable to us as his, we set ourselves upon a level with him, and claim as great a right to ourselves as he has; and if his interest does not appear as being of infinitely greater value to us than our own, we do not esteem him as being infinitely better than we are ourselves, and his right to us infinitely greater than our own right to ourselves is. It is, therefore, infinitely reasonable, since God is what he is, and has such a right to us as he has, that we should be constantly, from the very bottom of our hearts, wholly his, and every moment live wholly to him, and always have his interest lie most near our hearts, as being of infinitely more worth, value, and importance than our own. As Moses, who, in a measure, was made partaker of this divine nature, in the anguish of his heart, cries, when God tells him he will cut off Israel, and make of him a great nation, "Lord, let my name be *blotted out of thy book;* let it be forgotten from among the living, and be never heard of again in the world that ever I was in being: *But what will become of thy great name?*" God's honour and interest

were dear to him; but he comparatively cared not for his own *at all.* Exod. xxxii. Num. xiv.

But this our obligation to be entirely the Lord's, is still infinitely increased, if we consider the *authority* of the supreme *Governor* of the world, which, by his express *law,* has enjoined this upon us. It is not only infinitely fit, in its own nature that we should love God with all our hearts, considering what he is in himself, and that we should be entirely for him, in the temper of our minds, considering what an entire right he has to us as his creatures, who have received all we have from him and are absolutely dependent on him for all we want; but God has by *law* as *Governor* of the world, enjoined this upon us as our duty, and that with all his *authority:* And now, considering what he is in himself, and the *natural right* he has to all things, and how entirely we are his, and absolutely under his government, his AUTHORITY is infinitely binding; especially, considering how *infinitely engaged* he appears to be to see that his law be *exactly* obeyed, in promising eternal life on the one hand, and threatening eternal damnation on the other. This his *infinite engagedness,* lays us under infinite bonds to be and do *exactly* what he requires.

But still, our obligation to love him with all our hearts, and be wholly the Lord's, is yet infinitely more increased, if we consider what ways the Lord has taken with us in this apostate world, since our rebellion against him; since we have lost all esteem for him, turned enemies to him, cast off his authority, and practically bid defiance to his power and justice: for, instead of immediately dooming all this lower world to blackness of darkness for ever, he has sent his Son, his only begotten Son, from heaven, to bring us the news of pardon and peace, and, by his own death, to open a way for our return unto him, and to call and invite us to return. And now, with a liberal hand, he strews common mercies all round the world, among evil, unthankful, guilty, hell-deserving rebels, and fills the hearts of all with food and gladness; and sends forth his messengers to proclaim it to the ends of the earth, that it is his will that all his rebellious creatures lay down their weapons of rebellion; acknowledge the law, by which they stand condemned, to be holy, just, and good, and look to

him through Jesus Christ for pardon as a free gift, and through Jesus Christ return unto him, and give up themselves to him entirely, to love him and live to him, and delight in him for ever.

And while the world in general make light of all this, and go to their farms, and to their merchandize, and many are enraged and cry out against the messengers of peace, and stone some and kill others, (*Matt.* xxii.)—that *now* he should, of his own sovereign good pleasure, according to his eternal purpose, seize here and there one, by his all-conquering grace, and stop them in their career to hell, and make them see and feel their sin and guilt, and own the sentence just by which they stand condemned, and bring them as upon their knees to look to free grace through Jesus Christ for a pardon, and through Jesus Christ to give up themselves for ever to him; that *now* he should receive them to favour, and put them among his children, and become their father and their God, in an everlasting covenant, and undertake to teach and lead; to quicken and strengthen; to correct and comfort, and so to humble, and purify, and sanctify, and fit them for his heavenly kingdom; and, while they are in this world, to give them all things that are best for them, and make all things work together for their good, and finally bring them unto, and possess them of eternal glory and blessedness, in the full enjoyment of himself for ever; for a GOD of *infinite greatness* and *glory* to deal *just so*, with *just such creatures*, is the most amazing and astonishing grace; and lays *infinite bonds* upon believers to love the Lord their God with all their hearts, and to live to him for ever, and has the greatest tendency to animate them so to do. And thus, by these brief hints, we have a general view of the additional motives of a true and genuine love to God.

As God's bringing up the children of Israel out of Egypt; leading them through the wilderness; driving out the heathen from before them, and giving them that good land which floweth with milk and honey; and covenanting to be their God, is used so frequently, by Moses and the Prophets, throughout all the Old Testament, as a motive to engage them to cleave to the Lord, and to him only, and entirely,

and for ever; so God's sending his Son into the world, to save his people from their sins, their spiritual bondage, together with all the spiritual and everlasting blessings of the covenant of grace, are continually used in the New Testament, as arguments to engage believers not to live to themselves, but to him that died for them. Only here let these things be remembered:

(1.) That a sight and sense of the infinite *greatness* and *glory* of GOD, from whom all good comes, and a sense of their own infinite meanness and unworthiness, makes all the mercies they receive, infinitely the more *endearing* and *engaging*: for the *mercies themselves* now appear unspeakably the *greater*, in that they come from *such a God*, and *to such creatures;* and the *infinite goodness* of God shines the *brighter* in every mercy, and the *freeness* of his *grace* is the *more* conspicuous, on account of which he is infinitely amiable. The infinite greatness and glory of God, in *general*, ravishes the heart; the infinite moral beauty of the divine goodness and grace, in *particular*, ravishes the heart; and now, that *such a God* should show *such kindnesses* to *such a creature*, is very affecting. *Who am I, O Lord God? And what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?* says holy David. *And is this the manner of men, O Lord God?* No, Surely. *Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God: For there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee.* 2 Sam. vii. 18—22. God is loved for the kindnesses bestowed; but he is *more* loved for the infinite beauty of that goodness which is displayed in the bestowment of them, and for his being altogether such a one as he is. So the *Queen* of *Sheba* esteemed *Solomon* for the kindnesses he showed her, but primarily, and much more, for his own personal excellencies. And his personal excellencies made her esteem his favours to her of much greater worth. That a *glorious* and *ever-blessed* GOD should treat sinners so, is infinitely endearing. Now these sensations, which a true believer has, and his love to God arising therefrom, must be vastly different from every thing which natural men experience, who know not God, and have no higher principle in them than self-love.

(2.) Let it also be remembered, that God *designs*, by all his dealings and kindnesses to his people, to bring them *nearer to himself* in this world, and to the *everlasting enjoyment of himself* in the world to come. He means, for the present, to humble them, and wean them from the world; to make them more spiritually and heavenly-minded; to bring them to be more acquainted with God, and more entirely to take up their rest and contentment in him; and, therefore, all things are calculated, by his infinite wisdom and goodness, to attain this end. And this causes all the wise and kind dealings of God, outwardly in his providence, and inwardly by his Spirit, and that both by way of correction, as well as by way of consolation, to appear in a very affecting and engaging light to true believers. While they see what God is in himself, and his infinite beauty in being such; while they see how infinitely sufficient he is to be all things to them, and to do all things for them, and the blessedness of living wholly upon him, and trusting wholly in him; while they see God calculating all things to bring them to him, and actually find all things working this way, their obligations to love him and live to him appear infinitely binding, and their hearts are mightily engaged and animated. This view of things makes all their afflictions appear as great mercies; because they are so wisely calculated to bring them near to God. *Psalm* cxix. 71. This view of things adds an infinite value to all the kindnesses of God, over and above what they are worth merely in themselves, because they are all so wisely calculated to bring them near to God. This is the kernel of all that tender mercy and loving-kindness which they see in all their afflictions, and in all their comforts. *Heb.* xii. 10, 11. *Rom.* viii. 28. To be brought near to God, is worth more than all the world; there is no portion like God; no comfort like that which is to be taken in him; he is the Godly man's ALL.—*Psalm* lxxiii. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is nothing on earth I desire besides thee.* And now that such a *God* should take *such methods* with *just such a creature*, to bring him to the possession of *such a good*, is the most amazing goodness, and the most astonishing grace. Now here is a sense of the excellency of the divine nature in

general, and a sense of the moral beauty of the divine goodness in *particular*, and of the *unspeakable mercy* God shows to them, which *mercy* is *infinitely magnified* in their account, from the *value* they have for God, as the *portion* of their souls, from all which their love to God takes its rise; whereby their love appears to be exceedingly different from any thing which natural men experience, who neither know God, nor relish communion with him, but are contrary to him in all things; and, only from self-love, are glad of the good things they receive from God, which good things they live upon and make a God of; whether they be worldly good things, or great light, and comfort, and joy of a religious nature.

(3.) Let it also be remembered, that all God's gifts to his people are so many talents bestowed upon them, *ultimately to be improved for God,* whereby they are put under *advantages to glorify God and do good in the world.* And the more they have of worldly substance, of natural powers, of acquired accomplishments, and of the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, &c. the greater are their advantages to act for God, to promote his honour and interest, and to do good. Now, in proportion as they love God, in the same proportion is his honour and interest, and the good and welfare of his creatures and subjects, dear unto them. The interest and honour of God lie nearer to the hearts of his people, than their parents, or consorts, or children, or houses and lands; yea, than their own lives. (*Luke* xiv. 26.) To be under advantages, therefore, to promote his honour and interest, must, in their account, be esteemed an inestimable privilege.—Hence, they love God for all things they receive from him, *because* by all they are put under such advantages to live to him and serve him, seeking his interest, and honour, and glory; a remarkable instance of which we have in *Ezra,* that hearty friend to God, and to his honour and interest. See *Ezra* vii. 27, 28 compared with the rest of the *chapter.* Now herein, again, their love to God for his benefits is evidently different from any thing which natural men experience, who have no higher principle than self-love, and are entirely actuated by it.

And as the love of the saint and of the hypocrite thus greatly differ in their *nature*, so do they also differ as greatly in their *fruits* and *effects*. Ezra loved God greatly for his kindnesses to him, because thereby he was put under advantages to do so much for God's glory, and for the good of his people. And now see how active he is for God, and how he exerts himself to do good, and to reform every thing that was amiss among the Jews, from the *eighth chapter* and on; while the hypocritical Jews, who, no doubt, were also greatly affected with the mercy of God, in their deliverance from their long captivity, were so far from being active for God, that they, not caring for his honour or his laws, committed great abominations. *Ezra* ix. 1. So the *children of Israel*, at the Red Sea, seemed to be full of love to God, as well as *Moses*; but as they had different sorts of love, so their carriage did as greatly differ afterwards, for the course of forty years; and no wonder: for the hypocritical *Israelites* only loved themselves, and cared only for their own interest; but *Moses* loved God, and cared, above all things, for his honour.

Thus we see, not only what additional obligations believers are under to love God with all their hearts, but also how, and in what manner, they influence and excite them so to do: and what I have offered effectually obviates the common plea of formalists and all self-seekers, *That all the saints in scripture are represented as loving God for his benefits*; whence they argue, that they are right, and their religion genuine, which results merely from self-love, and the fear of hell, and hope of heaven, or from a confident persuasion that their sins are pardoned. For it is evident, that true saints do not love God for his benefits, nor eye their own happiness, in the same manner that such men do; but in a manner altogether different. Saints know the God they love, and love him, primarily, for what he is in himself, and because he is just what he is. But hypocrites know not God, nor love him; but are, in all things, contrary to him, and are only pleased with the false image of God they have framed in their fancies, merely because they think that he loves them, and has done, and will do, great things for them. Saints are affected with the divine goodness itself, for the moral beauty there is in it; but

hypocrites are affected only with the fruits and effects of divine goodness to them, as tending to make them happy. Saints love God for his benefits, under a real sense of their infinite unworthiness of the least of them; but so it is not with hypocrites. Saints love God for all the streams of divine goodness, because they are designed, and actually do lead them up to God, the fountain, who is the portion of their souls; but hypocrites live upon the streams, disrelishing the fountain. Saints love God dearly for all his gifts, because by them they are put under such advantages to live to God, to promote his interest and honour, and to do good in the world; but hypocrites are confined within the narrow circle, *self*. The love of saints to God animates them to live to God, and to exert themselves to promote his honour and interest, and to do all the good they can; but the hypocrite, after all his pretended love to God, cares not what becomes of his interest and honour, if it may but go well with him, his friends, and party. So that, while true saints love God for his benefits, they act, in a *gracious* manner, conformable to the law of God, and to the reason and nature of things; whereas, all the love of the most refined hypocrite is merely the workings of a natural self-love, in a manner directly contrary to the law of God, and to the reason and nature of things; and is nothing but mere mockery. *Psalm* lxxviii. 34, 35, 36, 37. *Zech.* vii. 5, 6.

Thus we have gone through the two first *general heads*, and see *what is implied in love to God*, and *from what motives we ought to love him*. And, from the whole, we may learn so much of the nature of true religion, as that, with much evidence and certainty, we may conclude,

First. *That all that seeming love to God is counterfeit, which arises merely from men's corruptions being gratified.* As when ambitious men are, by God's providence, raised to high degrees of honour, and worldly men are prospered in all which they put their hands unto, and herefrom the one and the other rejoice and bless God, and seem to love him, and verily think they are sincere. This is all hypocrisy; for, in truth, they only love their corruptions, and are glad they are gratified. And, accordingly, instead of improving all

their riches and honour for God, to advance his interest and honour in the world, they improve all only for themselves, to promote their own ends; and care not what becomes of God's honour, and interest, and kingdom; and commonly such men show themselves the greatest enemies to the cause of God, and so the religion of Christ: and should God but touch all they have, *they would curse him to his face.*

SECONDLY. We may be equally certain, *that all that seeming love to God is counterfeit, that arises merely from a legal, self-righteous spirit.* As when a man, only because he is afraid of hell, and has a mind to be saved, sets himself to repent, and reform, and do duties, and tries to love God and aim at his glory, to the intent that he may make some amends for past sins, and recommend himself to the divine favour, and so escape hell and obtain heaven. And when he has grown so good, as to have raised hopes of attaining his end, he is ravished at the thoughts, and rejoices, and blesses the Lord, and loves him. It is plain all this is hypocrisy; for the man, in truth, only loves himself, and is concerned merely for his own interest; but does not care at all for God, his glory, or honour: for, if there were no heaven nor hell, such would serve God no more. Children will work for their parents, without being hired, because they love them; but hirelings will not strike a stroke if there is no money to be gotten; because they care for nothing but their own interest.—Hence this sort of hypocrites are wont to say, that if they once believed that God had made no promises to the best they can do, they would never do more. And further, it is plainly all hypocrisy; for, if their consciences but fall asleep, so that they are troubled no more with the thoughts of another world, they will leave off their duties, let down their watch, break all their resolutions, and be as bad as ever: and hence their doctrine of falling from grace probably took its rise. And their hypocrisy is still more evident, in that they are commonly so much concerned to find out what the least measure of saving grace is, and so strenuous in pleading for great abatements in the law: for, from hence, it is plain, that all they are after is only to get just grace enough to carry them to heaven; as a lazy hireling, who is for doing but only just work enough.

to pass for a day's work, that he may get his wages at night, which is all he wants.

THIRDLY. We may be as certain, *that all that seeming love is counterfeit, which arises merely from a strong confidence which a man has, that his sins are pardoned, and that Christ loves him, and will save him.* As when a man is under great terrors, and has fearful apprehensions of hell and damnation, and is ready even to give himself up for lost: but suddenly great light breaks into his mind; he sees Christ with his arms open and smiling, and it may be his blood running, and hears him, as it were, say, *Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee; I have loved thee with an everlasting love: Come, thou blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom;* and now he is certain that his sins are pardoned, and that heaven is his, and he is even ravished with joy, and calls upon all to praise the Lord. For all this proceeds merely from self-love, and there is no love to God in it: for all this love arises from his false confidence, and not from any true knowledge of God; and commonly such turn out as the Israelites did *who sang God's praise* at the Red Sea when Pharaoh and his host were drowned, and they delivered, and their hopes of getting to Canaan highly raised; but *they soon forgat his works,* and rebelled against him, and their carcasses fell in the wilderness. They loved *themselves,* and therefore they rejoiced at their wonderful deliverance; they loved *themselves,* and therefore they murmured three days after, when they came to the bitter waters. Their joys and their murmurings proceeded from the very same principle, under different circumstances; but the love of God was not in them: and just this is the case here. And this is commonly the event, that, the fears of hell being now over, their joys gradually abate, and they grow more and more secure, till, after a while, they return to folly, as the dog to his vomit, and as the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire; and so are as bad and sometimes worse than ever; (2 *Pet.* ii. 20, 21, 22.) And now they plead that the best are dead sometimes, and that David and Peter had their falls; and so keep their consciences as quiet as they can: and thus they live along whole months and years together.

FOURTHLY, and lastly. We may also be certain, *that all that seeming love to God, which arises merely from the gratification of spiritual pride, is counterfeit.* As when men dream dreams, see visions, and hear voices, and have impressions and revelations whereby they are set up in their own esteem, and in the opinion of others, for some of the most peculiar favourites of heaven, and very best men in all the world; and hence they rejoice, and bless God, and mightily love him: but, in truth, they are only ravished with self-conceit, and feel blessedly to think themselves some of the best men in the world, and to think they shall shortly sit at the right hand of Christ in heaven among the apostles and martyrs, while their persecutors and haters will be burning in hell: but they neither know God nor love him; and, for the most part, by heretical doctrines, or wicked lives, or both, are a scandal to religion. These are so far from being truly religious, that *they are the very tares which the devil sows.* Mat. xiii. 39.

In each of these sorts of love there are these three defects or faults;—(1.) They have no true *knowledge* of God; and so (2.) they only love *themselves;* and (3.) their seeming love to God arises from a *mistake.* The ambitious and worldly man thinks himself very happy, because he rises in honour and estate; the legalist thinks that God loves him, and will save him for his duties; the next firmly believes that his sins are pardoned; and the last, that God looks upon him as one of the best men in the world: but all are wofully mistaken; and when, at the day of judgment, they come to see their mistake, their love to God will vanish away, and they turn everlasting haters and plasphemers of the most High. And another defect in these and all other sorts of counterfeit love, is, that they none of them will ever make men *truly obedient:* for when men's seeming to love God is nothing but self-love in another shape, all their seeming obedience will, in reality, be nothing but self-seeking. They may pretend to be the servants of God, but will only mean, ultimately, to serve themselves.

SECTION III.

CONCERNING THE MEASURE OF LOVE TO GOD REQUIRED IN THE DIVINE LAW.

I PROCEED now to the next thing proposed, which was,

III. To show *what is that* measure *of love to God, which the law requires of all mankind.* And our blessed Saviour clears up this point in the most plain and familiar language: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind;* and it is added, in *Mark* xii. 30, *with all thy strength;* i. e. in other words, we ought to love God in a measure exactly proportionable to the largeness of our natural powers and faculties; which to do, is all that perfection which God ever required of any of his creatures*.

When the law requires us to love God *with all our hearts,* it either means, to the utmost extent of our *natural* capacity, or else only to the utmost extent of our *moral* capacity; *i. e.* only so much as we are *inclined* to. And then the less we are inclined to love God, the less love is required; and so if we have no heart, no inclination to love him, then no love at all is required. And according to this rule, the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, is not *in duty bound* to be subject to the law, neither indeed can be: and where there is no

* The law runs thus: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with* ALL *thy heart, &c. and thy neighbour* AS *thyself.* God is to have the *highest degree* of love we are capable of: but a *much less* degree is due to ourselves and neighbours: So that, according to the tenour of the law, our love to God is to be *greater* and *more fervent,* than our love to ourselves. And therefore the law does suppose that God is worthy of our supreme love for what he is in himself, antecedent to any selfish consideration, from a sight and sense of which *worthiness* our love to God is primarily to take its rise: For, in the nature of things, it would be impossible for us, from self-love, to love God *more* than ourselves. Or thus, the law requires us to love God *more* than ourselves; but, in the nature of things, it is impossible that merely from self-love we should love God more than ourselves: therefore the law supposes that there is something in God to excite our love, antecedent to any selfish consideration, and that our love to him is not to proceed merely from self love: For, otherwise, the law requires us to do that which in its own nature is absolutely impossible. And this, by the way, may serve still further to confirm the truth of what has been before said.

law, there is no transgression; where there is no duty required, there can be no sin committed: and so the vilest of mortals are the freest from sin, and the least to blame; which is the grossest absurdity. When, therefore, the law requires us to love God with *all our hearts*, it has no reference to our *moral inclination*, but only to our *natural capacity*. And indeed nothing can be more unreasonable, than to suppose that the law only requires us to love God so far as we have a heart and disposition to do so; for this would leave us entirely at liberty to do otherwise, if we were so inclined, and, in effect, it would make the law say, *If you feel inclined to love God, more or less, so far it is your duty, but further you are not bound, but are at your liberty;* i. e. the law is not binding, any further than you are inclined to obey it; *i. e.* in reality it is *no law*, but every man is left to do as he pleases. The *whole heart*, therefore, does the law mean to require, let our temper, inclination, or disposition, be what it will.

God, the great author of all things, has been pleased to create intelligent beings of *different* sizes, some of a higher rank, and some of a lower; some of greater capacities, and some of less; some are angels, and some are men; and among the angels, some are of larger natural powers, and some of smaller. So it is among the good angels, and so it is among the evil angels. There are angels and arch-angels, i. e. beings of various natural powers and capacities, among the good and bad. And so it is among men; among good and bad, there is a very great variety; some have larger souls than others.

Intelligent beings are capable of a *degree* of knowledge and love, exactly *proportionable* to their *natural* powers. Angels are capable of a degree of knowledge and love, greater than men, and one man of a greater degree than another. As they are of different sizes; of larger and smaller natural powers, so their capacities to know and love are some greater, and some less. So it is among good and bad.

All that *perfection* which God requires of any of his creatures, is a measure of knowledge and love bearing an *exact proportion* to their *natural* abilities. Since God has manifested what he is, in his works and ways, and since he is infinitely glorious in being what he is, and has an original and

entire right to his intelligent creatures; therefore he requires all angels and men to attend diligently to the discoveries which he has made of himself, and learn what he is, and behold his glory, and love him with all their hearts. This is the extent of what God requires of the highest angel in heaven, and this is exactly what he requires of all the children of men upon earth.

The law requires *no more* than this of mankind, under a notion that their natural powers are lessened by the fall. Whether we are beings of as large natural powers as we should have been, had we never apostatized from God, or no, yet this is plain, we are no where in scripture blamed for having no larger natural powers, nor is any more ever required than *all the heart,* and *all the soul,* and *all the mind,* and *all the strength.* This is evident through the whole Bible.

And the law requires *no less* of mankind, under a notion that they are turned enemies to God, and have no heart or inclination to love him. Be it so, that mankind are ever so averse to attend to those manifestations which God has made of himself, and ever so averse to take in right notions of God, and ever so far from a disposition to account him infinitely glorious in being what he is, and from an inclination to love him with all their hearts; yet the divine law makes no allowances; no abatements; but insists upon the same—the very same it ever did: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.*

Indeed, some do dream that the law is very much abated. But what saith the scriptures as to this point? Does the word of God teach us that there is any abatement made? Where do we read it? Where is it plainly asserted, or in what texts is it implied? Truly, I know nothing like it in all the Bible, nor what texts of scripture this notion can be built upon: and besides, if the law is abated, *when* was it abated? Was it abated immediately upon Adam's fall? Surely no; for, above two thousand years after, from Mount Sinai, God declared that he required sinless perfection, and threatened a curse against the man that should fail in the least point. *Exod.* xx. *Deut.* xxvii. 26. Was it abated upon Christ's coming into the world? Surely no; for he, in the strongest terms, taught his

disciples that it was in full force, and that it was their duty to be perfectly holy, and that in designed opposition to the doctrine of the Pharisees, who, in effect, held that the law was abated. *Mat.* v. 17—48. Was it abated after Christ's death and resurrection? Surely no; for St. Paul always taught that the Christian scheme of religion which he preached, did not make void, but rather established the law. *Rom.* iii. 31. And St. James insisted upon it, that it must not be broken in any one point. *James* ii. 10. When was it abated, therefore? Why, says Christ, *Till heaven and earth shall pass away, one jot or tittle of the law shall in no wise fail.* Mat. v. 18. And besides, if the law is abated, *in what particular* is it abated, and *how great* are the abatements? Are there any abatements made in our duty to God? Surely no; for we are still required to love him with all our hearts, and more than this never was demanded. Or are any abatements made in our duty to our fellow-men? Surely no; for we are still required to love our neighbour as ourselves, and more than this never was enjoined. Or is there any abatement made in the internal part of our duty? Surely no; for the whole heart is still required, and more than this never was insisted upon. Or, finally, is there any abatement made in the external part of our duty? Surely no; for we are still required to be *holy in all manner of conversation, as he that has called us is holy,* (1 Pet. i. 15.) and more than this was never required. So that, from the whole, we have as much reason to think that the law requires sinless perfection *now,* as that *ever* it did: yea, this point cannot be plainer than it is; for the law, in fact, is the very same it was from the beginning, word for word, without the least alteration: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,* &c. *and thy neighbour as thyself;* so that, if it *ever* did require sinless perfection, it does *now.*

The highest pitch of holiness the saints in *heaven* will ever arrive to, will only be to love God with *all* their hearts; and exactly the very same is required of every man upon *earth.* And it was because St. Paul understood the law in this sense, that he had always such a mean and low opinion of all his attainments; for while he compared what he *was,* with what he *ought to be,* he plainly saw how the case stood: and there-

fore he says, *The law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. O wretched man that I am!* Rom. vii. 14. 24.

So that, upon the whole, this seems to be the true state of the case: as there are various capacities among all intelligent creatures in general, so there are among men in particular, souls of various sizes; some of larger natural capacities, and some of smaller; but souls of different capacities are capable of different degrees of love. A degree of love exactly equal to the natural capacity of the soul, is perfection; and this is what the law requires, nor more nor less; *all* the heart, *all* the soul, *all* the mind, *all* the strength. The saints and angels in heaven love God thus, and hence they are perfect in holiness; and, so far as we fall short of this, we are sinful.

This is the exact rule of duty. And now, this law is *holy, just,* and *good.* The thing required, is in its own nature, right, fit, and suitable. God is worthy to be loved with all our hearts, and this is just what is required. It is right we should have a degree of love to ourselves, and it is right we should love our neighbours *as ourselves;* but it is fit we should love God with *all our hearts.* Considering what he is, and what we are, it is in its own nature, infinitely fit and right; and not to do so, infinitely unfit and wrong. Indeed, God is worthy of an infinitely greater degree of love than we, or any of his creatures, are capable of. He only is capable of a complete view of his own infinite glory, and of a full sense of his own infinite beauty, and of a love perfectly adequate to his own loveliness: and he does not require or expect any of his creatures to love him to that degree he loves himself; only, as he loves himself with *all his* heart, so he requires and expects that they love him with *all their* hearts. And there being the same reason for one as for the other, the law is, therefore, in its own nature, perfectly *right,* and *just,* and *equal.* Indeed, had God required the most exalted of his intelligent creatures to have loved him in the same *degree* that he himself does, then the thing required would, in its own nature, have been absolutely impossible, and what he could have no reason to expect: Or, if he had required the meanest of his intelligent creatures to have loved him, in the same *degree* that *Gabriel* does, it would have been a thing *naturally* im-

possible; but now he only requires every one to love him with *all their hearts:* this is *right;* perfectly *right, just,* and *equal.* Less than this could not in justice have been required of each one; in justice, I mean to the Deity, who ought to have his due from each one, and whose proper right the Governor of the world ought to assert and maintain.

Thus we see the law is exactly upon a level with our *natural* capacities; it *only* requires us to love God with *all* our hearts: and thus we see that the law is therefore perfectly reasonable, just, and equal. Deut. x. 12. *And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with* ALL *thy heart, and with* ALL *thy soul?*

Hence, as to a *natural* capacity, all mankind are *capable* of a perfect conformity to this law; for the law requires of no man any more than to love God with *all his heart.* The sinning angels have the same *natural* capacities now, as they had before they fell; they have the same *faculties,* called the *understanding* and *will;* they are still the same beings, as to their *natural* powers. Once they loved God with *all their hearts;* and now they hate him with *all their hearts:* Once they had a great degree of love; now they have as great a degree of hatred; so that they have the same natural capacities now as ever. Their *temper,* indeed, is different; but their *capacity* is the same; and, therefore, as to a *natural capacity,* they are as *capable* of a perfect conformity to the law of their Creator as ever they were. So, Adam, after his fall, had the same soul that he had before, as to its *natural capacities,* though of a very different *temper;* and, therefore, in that respect, was as *capable* of a perfect conformity to this law, as ever. And it is plainly the case, that all mankind, as to their *natural* capacities, are *capable* of a perfect conformity to the law, from *this,* that when sinners are converted they have no new *natural* faculties, though they have a *new temper:* and when they come to love God with all their hearts in heaven, still they will have the *same hearts,* as to their *natural* faculties, and may, in this respect, be justly looked upon as the very same beings. In this sense, Paul was the same man when he hated

and persecuted Christ, as when he loved him and died for him: and that *same heart* that was once so full of malice, is now as full of love. So that, as to his *natural* capacities, he was as *capable* of a perfect conformity to this law, when he was a persecutor, as he is now in heaven. When, therefore, men cry out against the holy law of God, which requires us only to love him with *all our hearts*, and say, "It is not *just* for God to *require* more than we *can* do, and then threaten to damn us for not doing," they ought to stay a while, and consider what they say, and tell what they mean by their CAN DO; for it is plain, that the law is exactly upon a level with our *natural* capacities, and that, in this respect, we are *fully capable* of a perfect conformity thereto. And it will be impossible for us to excuse ourselves by an *inability* arising from *any other* quarter; as will presently appear. For, to return,

From what has been said, we may learn, that there can be nothing to render it, in any measure, a *hard* and *difficult* thing, to love God with all our hearts, but our being destitute of a *right temper* of mind, and having a *temper* that is *wrong*: and that, therefore, we are *perfectly inexcusable*, and *altogether* and *wholly* to *blame*, that we do not.

OBJ. *But I do not know God; how, therefore, can I love him?*

ANS. Were you of a *right temper*, it would be your *nature*, above all things, to attend to those discoveries which he has made of himself in his works and in his word; you would search for the knowledge of him, as men search for silver, and as they dig for hidden treasure: and, were you of a *right temper*, it would be *natural* to take in that very representation which God has made of himself. And now, was it but your nature to attend, with all your heart, to the discoveries which God has made of himself; and your nature to take in right notions of him, it would be impossible but that you should know *what God is;* because he has *acted out* all his perfections so much to the life, and *exhibited* such an *exact* image of himself. The works of creation and redemption, and all his conduct as moral Governor of the world, show just what kind of Being he is. He has discovered his infinite understanding and almighty power, and he has shown the temper

of his heart; and all in so plain a manner, that, were it your nature to attend and consider, and take in right notions, it is quite impossible but that you should know and see plainly *what God is.*

OBJ. *But if I have right notions of what God is, yet I cannot see his glory and beauty in being such; how, therefore, can I love him?*

ANS. Were you of a *right temper,* it would be your *nature* to account him infinitely glorious in being what he is. As it is the nature of an ambitious man to see a glory in applause, and of a worldly man to see a glory in the things of the world, so it would be your nature to see a glory in God; for what suits our hearts, naturally appears excellent in our eyes. (*John* viii. 42. 47.)

OBJ. *But I feel that I cannot love him; how, therefore, am I wholly to blame?*

ANS. The fault is in him, or in you: Either he is not lovely, or else you are of a very bad temper: but he is infinitely lovely; and therefore it is only owing to the bad temper of your heart, and to your being destitute of a right temper, that you cannot love him; and you, therefore, are wholly to blame: Indeed you could not but love him, were you not a very sordid wretch.

OBJ. *But to love God, or to have any disposition to love him, is a thing* SUPERNATURAL, *clean beyond the powers of nature, improved to the utmost; how can I, therefore, be wholly to blame?*

ANS. It is a thing *supernatural,* you say; *i. e.* in other words, you have *no heart to it,* nor the least inclination that way; nor is there any thing in your temper to work upon by motives to bring you to it; and now, because you are so very bad a creature, therefore you are not at all to blame. This is your argument. But can you think that there is any force in it? What! are moral agents the less to blame the worse they grow? And are God's laws no longer binding, than while his subjects are disposed to obey them?

OBJ. *But, after all, I must needs reply, as* Nicodemus *in another case,* How can these things be?

ANS. Why did not the Jews love their prophets, and love

Christ and his apostles? What was it owing to? And where did the blame lie? They were acquainted with them; heard them talk and preach, and saw their conduct, and could not but plainly perceive their temper, and know what sort of disposition they were of, and what sort of men they were; and yet they did not like them; but they hated them; they belied them, slandered and reproached them, and put them to death. And now what was the matter? What was the cause of all this? Were not their prophets, and Christ and his apostles indeed lovely, and worthy of their hearty esteem? Did not all that they said and did, manifest them to be so? Why, then, did they not love them? Was it not wholly owing to their not having a right temper of mind, and to their being of so bad a disposition? And were they not wholly to blame? They might say of Christ, *That they could see no form nor comeliness in him, wherefore they should desire him;* and where no *beauty* is seen, it is impossible there should be any *love*. But why did not he appear most amiable in their eyes? And why were their hearts not ravished with his beauty? His *disciples* loved him, and *Martha*, and *Mary*, and *Lazarus* loved him; and why did not the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* love him as much? Why, because his person and doctrines did not suit them, and were not agreeable to the *temper* of their hearts. The bad temper of their hearts made him appear odious in their eyes, and was the cause of all their ill-will towards him. And now, were they not to *blame* for this bad temper, and for all their bad feelings, and bad carriage towards Christ, thence arising? Yes, surely, if ever any men were to blame for any thing. And now, if God the Father had been in the same circumstances as God the Son was then in, he would not have been loved a jot more, or treated a whit better than he was. Indeed it was that image and resemblance of the infinitely glorious and blessed God, which was to be seen in their prophets; in Christ and his apostles, which was the very thing they hated him for: Therefore Christ says, *He that hateth me, hateth my Father also. But now have they both seen and hated, both me and my Father.* John xv. 23, 24. And Christ attributes it entirely to their want of a right temper, and to the bad disposition of their hearts, that they did not love him, and love his doctrines.

If God were your father, you would love me. John viii. 42. *He that is of God,* (of a God-like temper,) *heareth God's words: ye, therefore, hear them not, because ye are not of God,* (ver. 47.) In truth, the bottom of all your enmity is, *that you are of your father, the devil,* i. e. of just such a temper as he, (*ver.* 44.) And now, what think you, when Christ comes in flaming fire, to take vengeance on an ungodly world? Will he blame the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* for not loving him with all their hearts, or no? Or will he excuse the matter, and say, on their behalf, *They could see no form nor comeliness in me. I appeared very odious to them; they could not love me; they could not but hate me, and no man is to blame for not doing more than he* CAN?

From the whole, it is plain that mankind are to blame, wholly to blame, and perfectly inexcusable, for their not having right apprehensions of God, and for their not having a sense of his glory in being what he is, and for their not loving him with all their heart; because all is owing merely to their want of a right temper, and to the bad disposition of their hearts.

Indeed, if we were altogether of such a temper, frame, and disposition of heart as we ought to be, it would be altogether as easy and natural to love God with all our hearts, as it is for the most dutiful child to love a tender and valuable parent. For God is really infinitely amiable; and were we of such a temper, he would appear so in our eyes; and did he appear so in our eyes, we could not but love him with all our hearts, and delight in him with all our souls; and it would be most easy and natural so to do; for no man ever found any difficulty in loving that which appears very amiable in his eyes. For the proof of which I appeal to the experience of all mankind. And now, why does not God appear infinitely amiable in our eyes? Is it because he has not clearly revealed *what he is,* in his works and in his word? Surely no; for the revelation is plain enough. Is it because he is not infinitely amiable in being what he is? Surely no; for all heaven are ravished with his infinite beauty. What is it, then, that makes us blind to the infinite excellency of the divine nature? Why, it can be owing to nothing but a bad temper

of mind in us, and to our not being of such a temper as we ought to be. For I appeal to the experience of all mankind, whether those persons and things which suit the temper of their hearts, do not naturally appear amiable in their eyes? And certainly, if God does not suit the temper of our hearts, it is not owing to any fault in him, but the fault must be wholly in ourselves. If the temper and disposition of God (i. e. his moral perfections,) be not agreeably to our temper and disposition, most certainly our temper and disposition are very wrong. *If God were your father, ye would love me;* but *ye are of your father the devil,* therefore ye hate me; (*John* viii. 42. 44.) i. e. "If you were of a temper like God, ye would love me; but being of a contrary temper, hence you hate me. If you were of a right temper, I should appear amiable unto you; and it is wholly owing to your bad temper, that I appear otherwise. *If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.*" (Verse 39.)

OBJ. *But be it so, yet I cannot help being of such a temper as I am of; how, therefore am I wholly to blame?*

ANS. You have as much power to help being of such a temper as the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* had; but Christ judged them to be wholly to blame, and altogether inexcusable. They *could not* like Christ or his doctrine: *Ye* CANNOT *hear my word,* says Christ, (*verse* 43;) but their CANNOT, their *inability,* was no excuse to them in Christ's account, because all their inability, he plainly saw, arose from their bad temper, and their want of a good disposition. And although they had no more *power* to help being of such a temper than you have, yet he judged them wholly to blame, and altogether inexcusable. (*John* viii. 33—47. *John* xv. 22—25.) And now we know that *his judgment is according to truth.* But in order to help you to see into the *reason* of the thing, I desire you seriously and impartially to consider,

1. That *sinners are free and voluntary in their bad temper.* A wicked world have discovered a very strong disposition to hate God, even from the beginning. And the Jewish nation, God's own peculiar people, of whom, if of any, we might hope for better things, were so averse to God and his ways, that they hated and murdered the messengers which he sent to re-

see, and hear, and understand, and know divine things; and should be ravished with their beauty; and it would be most natural and easy to love God with all our hearts.

And hence, it is most evident that the supreme Governor of the world has not the least ground or reason to abate his law, or to reverse the threatening; nor have a rebellious world the least ground or reason to charge God with cruelty, and say, "It is not *just* that he should *require more than we can do*, and threaten to damn us for not doing;" for, from what has been said, it is manifest that the *law is holy, just, and good*; and that there is nothing in the way of our perfect conformity to it, but our own wickedness, in which we are free, and hearty, and voluntary; and for which, therefore, in strict justice, we deserve eternal damnation. The law is already exactly upon a level with our natural capacities, and it need not, therefore, be brought any lower. And there is no greater punishment threatened than our sin deserves; there is, therefore, no reason the threatening should be reversed: as to the law, all is well, and there is no need of any alteration: and there is nothing amiss, but in ourselves. It is impudent wickedness, therefore, to fly in the face of God and of his holy law, and charge him with injustice and cruelty; because, forsooth, we hate him so bad that we cannot find it in our hearts to love him; and are so high-hearted and stout that we must not be blamed. No, we are too good to be blamed in the case, and all the blame, therefore, must be cast upon God and his holy law. Yea, we are come to that, in this rebellious world, that if God sends to us the news of pardon and peace through Jesus Christ, and invites us to return unto him and be reconciled, we are come to that, I say, as to take it as an high affront at the hands of the Almighty. "He pretends to offer us mercy," (say God-hating, God-provoking sinners,) "but he only mocks us; for he offers all upon conditions which we cannot possibly perform."

This is as if they should say, "We hate him so much, and are of so high a spirit, that we cannot find in our hearts to return, and own the law to be just, by which we stand condemned, and look to his free mercy, through Jesus Christ, for pardon and eternal life; and, therefore, if he will offer

pardon and eternal life upon no easier terms, he does but dissemble with us, and mock and deride us in our misery." And since this is the true state of the case, therefore it is no wonder that even infinite goodness itself, has fixed upon a day when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. And then shall ungodly sinners be convinced of all their hard speeches which they have ungodlily spoken against the Lord; and then shall the righteousness of all God's ways be made manifest before all the world.

To conclude. God, the great Lord of all, has threatened eternal damnation against all those who do not perfectly keep the law, (*Gal.* iii. 10.) even although they live and die in the midst of the heathen world, *Rom.* i. 18, 19, 20. (of which more afterwards.) And at the day of judgment he will execute the threatening upon all, (those only excepted, that are by faith, interested in Christ and in the new covenant,) and his so doing will evidently be justifiable in the sight of all worlds, on this ground, viz. That they were not under a *natural necessity* of sinning, but were altogether *voluntary* in their disobedience. *Luke* xix. 27. *But those mine* ENEMIES *which* WOULD NOT *that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them them before me.*

And *this*, by the way, is the very thing which stops the mouth of an awakened, convinced, humble sinner, and settles him down in it, that he deserves to be damned, notwithstanding all his *doings*, viz. that he is what he is, not by *compulsion*, or through a *natural necessity*, but altogether *voluntarily*. There is nothing more difficult in the whole work preparatory to conversion, than to make the sinner see, and feel, and own, that it is just, quite just, altogether just and fair, for God to damn him. He pleads, *that he is sorry for all his sins, and is willing to forsake them all for ever, and is resolved always to do as well as he can.* He pleads, *that he cannot help his heart's being so bad; that he did not bring himself into that condition, but that he was brought into it by the fall of Adam, which he could not possibly prevent, and which he had no hand in.* But when he comes in a clear and realizing manner, to see and

feel the *whole truth*, viz. that he does not care for God, nor desire to, but is really an enemy to him in his *very heart*, and *voluntarily* so, and that all his fair pretences and promises, prayers and tears, are but mere hypocrisy, arising only from self-love, and guilty fears, and mercenary hopes, NOW the business is done. For, says he, *It matters not how I came into this condition, nor whether I can help having so bad a heart, since I am* voluntarily *just such a one as I am, and really* love *and* choose *to be what I am.* Rom. vii. 8, 9. *Sin revived and I died.* He feels himself without excuse, and that his mouth is stopped, and that he must be forced to own the sentence just; for he feels that it is not owing to any *compulsion* or *natural necessity*, but that he is *voluntarily* and *heartily* such a one as he is. And *now*, and not till *now*, does he feel himself to be a sinner, *completely* so; for he, all along before, fancied some goodness to be in him, and thought himself in some measure excusable: and *now*, and not till *now*, is he prepared to attribute his salvation *entirely* to free and sovereign grace. All along before he had something *to say for himself*, like the *Pharisee:* But, with the *publican* he *now sees* that he lies at *mercy*, Luke xviii. 13. *This* is the very thing that makes all mankind to blame, altogether to blame, for being what they are, namely, that they are *voluntarily* so; *this* is the reason they deserve to be damned for being so, and *this*, when seen and felt by the awakened sinner, effectually stops his mouth.

And *this*, also, is the very thing that makes believers see themselves *wholly to blame* for not being perfectly holy, and lays a foundation for their *mourning* for their *want* of a *perfect* conformity to the law. They feel their defects are not the result of a *natural necessity*, but only of the remains of their old aversion to God, which, so far as they are unsanctified, they are *voluntary* in*. And hence they cry out, *I am car-*

* OBJ. "But does not St. Paul say, in Rom. vii. 18. *To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not?*"

ANS. 'Tis true, he had a strong disposition to be perfectly holy, but his disposition was not perfect. He had a strong disposition to love God supremely, live to him entirely, and delight in him wholly, but his whole heart was not perfectly disposed to do so. There was a spirit of aversion to God, and love to sin,

nal, sold under sin, O wretched man that I am! Rom. vii. 14. 24; and set themselves down for *beasts* and *fools.* Psalm lxxiii. 22.

And finally, this want of a good temper; this voluntary and stubborn aversion to God, and love to themselves, the world, and sin, is ALL that renders the immediate influences of the Holy Spirit so absolutely necessary, or indeed at all needful, to recover and bring them to love God with all their hearts. A bare representation of what God is, were men of a right temper, would ravish their hearts; for his beauty and glory are infinite. It is nothing, therefore, but their badness that makes it needful that there should be *line upon line, and precept upon precept.* It is their aversion to God, that makes any *persuasions* at all needful; for, were they of a right temper, they would love God with all their hearts, *of their own accord.* And surely, were not men very bad indeed, there would be no occasion for his ambassadors with *such earnestness* to beseech them. *We pray you,* says the apostle, *in Christ's*

remaining in him. *In me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing:* and this was the ground and cause of all his impotency. So that when he says, *To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not,* he means, "To be in a measure disposed to love God supremely, live to him entirely, and delight in him wholly, is natural and easy; but how to get my whole heart into the disposition, I find not; it is beyond me, through the remains of the flesh, i. e. of my native contrariety to God, and love to sin." Which remaining contrariety to God, and propensity to sin, so far as he was unsanctified, he was *voluntary* in; but so far as he was sanctified, he perfectly hated. *With my mind, I myself serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin.* Ver. 25. And *so the spirit lusted against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit;* and these two were *contrary the one to the other,* and hence he *could not do the things that he would.* Gal. v. 17.

OBJ. "But does not St. Paul speak several times, in Rom. vii. as if he was not *properly to blame* for his remaining corruptions, when he says, *It is not I, but sin that dwelleth in me!*"

ANS. He only means, by that phrase, to let us know that his remaining corruption was not the *governing principle* in him: according to what he had said in *Rom.* vi. 14. *Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace:* but does not at all design to insinuate, that he did not see himself to blame, yea, wholly to blame, for his remaining corruption. For though he says sometimes, *It is not I, but sin that dwelleth in me,* yet, at other times, *I am carnal, sold under sin.* Ver. 14 *O wretched man that I am.* Ver. 24. like a broken-hearted penitent. But he could not have mourned for his remaining corruption as being *sinful,* if he had not felt himself to *blame* for it.

stead, be ye reconciled to God. 2 Cor. v. 20. But now, that all external means that can *possibly* be used; all arguments, and motives, and entreaties, urged in the *most forcible manner*, should not be able to recover men to God, no, not *one*, in *all* the world, without the immediate influences of the Holy Spirit, can surely be attributed to nothing short of this, that an apostate world are, in very deed, at enmity against God, and their contrariety to him is mightily settled and rooted in their hearts; mightily settled and rooted *indeed*, that *Paul* was nothing, and *Apollos* nothing, and all their most vigorous efforts nothing; so that without the immediate influences of the Holy Spirit, not one, by them, although the best preachers, of mere men, that ever lived, could be persuaded to turn to God. 1. *Cor.* iii. 7. But that the world should, in fact, rise in arms, and put the messengers of heaven to death, seems to argue *enmity* and *malice*, to the highest degree. It is men's *badness* that keeps them from taking in right apprehensions of God, and that makes them blind to the beauty of the divine nature, and that makes them hate God, instead of loving him: but for *this*, they would love God of *their own accord*, without any more ado. *If God were your father*, (says Christ,) *ye would love me; ye are of your father the devil*, therefore ye hate me. Surely, then, all the world are inexcusable, and wholly to blame, for their continuance in sin, and justly deserve eternal damnation at the hands of God, as was before said. Nor is it any excuse to say, "God does not give me sufficient grace to make me better;" since I might love God, with all my heart, of my own accord, with all the ease in the world, if I were but of a right temper. Yea, such is his glory and beauty, that I could not but be ravished with it, were I such as I ought to be; and my needing any special grace, to make me love God, argues that I am an enemy to him, a vile, abominable wretch, not fit to live. And to pretend to excuse myself, and say, "I cannot, and God will not make me," is just as bad as if a rebellious child should go to his father, and say, "I hate you, and cannot love you, and God will not, by his almighty power, make me better, and therefore I am not to blame;" for the wretch could not but love his good father, were it not that he is so exceedingly vitiated in his temper.—

If our impotency consisted in and resulted from our want of natural capacities; if it was the business of the Holy Spirit to give us new natural faculties, then we might plead our inability, and plead God's not giving us sufficient power, in excuse for ourselves. But since all our impotency takes its rise entirely from another quarter, and all our need of the influences of the Holy Spirit to bring us to love God results from our badness, therefore are we without excuse, although God leaves us entirely to ourselves. And indeed nothing can be more absurd than to suppose the Governor of the world *obliged* to make his creatures love him, *in spite of all their aversion*; or more wicked than to lay the *blame* of their not loving him, *upon him*, in case he does not. *Jer.* vii. 8, 9, 10—16.

Obj. But if it be granted that men's natural powers are adequate with the law of God, and so they, as to their natural capacities, are capable of a perfect conformity to the law; and if it be granted that the outward advantages, which all have who live under the gospel, are sufficient, were men but of a right temper, to lead them to the true knowledge of God, and so, that all such are without excuse; yet, if any part of mankind do not enjoy sufficient outward advantages for the true knowledge of God, without which it is impossible they should either love or serve him, how can such justly and fairly be accounted altogether to blame, and wholly inexcusable? If the *heathen*, who have no other outward advantages whereby to gain the true knowledge of God, than the works of creation and providence, do but honestly improve what they have, shall not they be accepted, although they fall short of sinless perfection? Or is it right and fair that they should be damned?

Ans. I suppose that those advantages, which all mankind do actually enjoy, would be sufficient to lead them to a true knowledge of God, and so to love and serve him, were they of a right disposition, and were it not for the prejudices that blind and darken their minds, which arise from their enmity to God, and love to themselves, the world, and sin. *Rom.* i. 20. 28. And I suppose that God, the wise and holy, just and good Governor of the world, is under no natural obligation to use any supernatural means for the removal of those

prejudices; (*Rom.* ix. 15.) especially considering that men love them, and are obstinate in them, and will not let them be removed if they can help it, as is, in fact, the case. *Rom.* i. 18. 28. *John* iii. 19. And I suppose that, since the law is holy, just, and good, nothing short of sinless perfection *can*, or *ought* to, pass with the supreme Law-giver and Judge of the world, as a condition of acceptance. *Gal.* iii. 10. *Rom.* iii. 20. And I suppose that God was under no obligations to provide a Saviour to bear the curse of the law, and answer its demands for *any*, since *all* are voluntarily at enmity against him and his law. *Rom.* v. 8. Upon the whole, I suppose that all mankind might have been left in their fallen state, without a Saviour, or any offers of pardon and peace, or any supernatural advantages whatsoever; and that yet their natural obligations to love God with all their hearts, would have by no means ceased; and that it would have been perfectly just and right with God, to have inflicted eternal damnation upon us, for our not doing so. *Rom.* i 18. iii. 19. And besides, I suppose that all the nations of the earth might have had the gospel preached to them, and, to this day, enjoyed it, had not the world been in arms against it, and killed the messengers of peace, who were sent to carry the glad tidings of pardon and salvation round the world. *Mat.* xxviii. 19. And I suppose, that still, in every age of the Christian church, there have been ministers of Christ, who would gladly go to the furthest parts of the earth, to carry the joyful news of a Saviour, were men but willing to receive the news, and repent, and convert, and return to God. I know there are such in this age; from all which, I suppose that it is right, fair, and just, for God to execute the threatening of his law according to his declared design. *Rom.* ii. 5, 6. Thus much in general; but, to be more particular,

1. It is plain that the heathen, as well as the rest of mankind, are under a law that forbids all sin, and requires perfect holiness. *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,* let them be *Jews* or *Gentiles.* Rom. i. 18. And since God is what he is, and they his creatures, there is the same general ground and reason that they should love him with all their hearts, as

that others should. And it is plain St. Paul looked upon the heathen under obligations *to glorify God as God, and be thankful.* Rom. i. 21. Which is the sum of what is required in the first table of the law. And none will pretend that the heathen are not obliged to love their neighbours as themselves, and do as they would be done by; which is the sum of what the second table requires. So that it is a plain case, that they are, by the law of nature, obliged to the same perfect holiness which is required, in God's written word, of the rest of mankind.

2. It is plain, St. Paul looked upon them as enjoying sufficient means of knowledge, and so to be without excuse. *Rom.* i. 18. *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.* "Who hold the truth in unrighteousness, i. e. who, instead of heartily receiving, and loving, and conforming to the truth, do, from love to their lusts, hate, and wickedly suppress, all right notions of God, of truth, and duty, stifling their consciences." But how do the Gentiles discover this aversion to the truth, who are under no advantages to know it? "I answer," says the apostle, "their advantages are sufficient; for, (*verse* 19.) *That which may be known of God is manifest in them;* i. e. the perfections of God, which is all that is knowable of God, are discovered to them;" as he adds, "*For God hath showed it unto them.*" But were not the perfections of God discovered to them so darkly as not to be sufficiently evident and perceivable? "No," says he; "for, (*verse* 20.) *The invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are* CLEARLY SEEN, *being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse;* i. e. ever since the creation of the world, the perfections of God are clearly to be seen in his works, the things which he has made manifesting plainly what a God he is: so that those who see not his perfections, and are not sensible of his infinite glory, cannot plead their want of sufficient outward advantages, in excuse for their ignorance and insensibility; and therefore the heathen, who have this advantage, are without excuse*." And, still fur-

* If it should be *objected*, that St. Paul only means that their advantages were so great as to render them inexcusable in their gross idolatry and high-handed

ther to clear up the point, the apostle seems to go on, as it were, to say—"Yea, it is evident that the present ignorance of the Gentile nations is affected, and so inexcusable, not only from the sufficiency of their present outward advantages, but also from their *former* misimprovement of the advantages which they *heretofore* did enjoy. *Because,* (ver. 21.) *when they knew God,* i. e. when the heathen nations *formerly* had right notions of God instilled into them, being instructed in the knowledge of the true God, by Noah and his sons, from whom they descended, yet then *they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful;* their instructions had no influence upon them to make them holy: *but* they *became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened;* i. e. they soon fell off to idolatry, and lost that knowledge of the true God, in which they had been instructed and educated: *For* (ver. 28.) *they did not like to retain God in their knowledge;* i. e. to remember those instructions which had been given them concerning the nature and perfections of God*: But they aban-

wickedness, because they did, or might have known better than to do so, it may be easily *answered,* from the 18th *verse,* that he means to prove that they were altogether inexcusable, not only in their *gross sins,* but also in *all* their *ungodliness* and *unrighteousness,* i. e. plainly, in *all* their want of a perfect conformity to the moral law, or law of nature; for the least degree of non-conformity, in heart or life, to the first table of the law, is a degree of *ungodliness;* and the very least degree of non-conformity to the second table of the law, is a degree of *unrighteousness.* And St. Paul is express in it that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against ALL *ungodliness,* &c. And, in *ver.* 21, he is full in it that the heathen are wholly inexcusable for *not glorifying God as God,* which is manifestly *all* that the law ever required; so that it is plain he does not design merely to prove that they were inexcusable in their *idolatry,* and the *gross wickedness* of their lives, but also that they were inexcusable in, and wholly to blame for *their not being perfectly holy;* for they did, or might have known, that *God deserved to be loved with all their heart,* and *their neighbour as themselves.*

* And I may add. *Concerning the seed of the woman; the promised Messiah, and the way of salvation through him;* for, no doubt, Noah and his sons had heard of this promise, and told it to their posterity; and if they had handed it down safe from age to age, the heathen world might, throughout all generations, have been in a salvable state; for this promise contained the sum and substance of the gospel. Methuselah lived *two hundred and forty years* in the days of Adam; Noah lived *six hundred,* and his sons about a *hundred* years in the days of Methuselah: and Isaac was *fifty* years old before all Noah's sons were dead: so that this promise might easily have been handed along down by tradition, and doubtless would have been so, had it been precious in the eyes of the children of men: And

doned themselves to idolatry; (ver. 23, 25.) *For which cause,* (ver. 24. 26.) for which contempt cast on God, *God gave them up* to all manner of wickedness; so that the present extreme ignorance, blindness, and wickedness of the Gentile nations, they have, through their aversion to God and love to sin, brought themselves into: so that it is manifest they do not desire the knowledge of God, but evidently hate all right notions of him, and so are, beyond dispute, *without excuse;* which was the point to be proved." Thus he proves that they are without excuse, because their present advantages for the knowledge of God are sufficient; which advantages, ever since the creation of the world, have been common to all; and because they had once superadded advantages from parental instructions, which, instead of well improving, and of carefully handing down from generation to generation, they hated to remember, and so soon forgot.

And these *passages* ought to be of more weight to decide the case, because they are not merely occasional strokes, but the apostle is evidently upon the very same point that I am: For, from the 18th *verse* of this *first chapter,* to the 19th *verse* of the *third,* he is industriously labouring to prove, *that both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin,* and so *the whole world guilty before God:* And his arguments are not fetched from *Adam's first sin,* but from comparing them with the law of God, whereby he discovers their weaknesses; all the blame whereof, he entirely lays upon them: and because it might have been *objected, that the heathen world had not sufficient means of knowledge, and so were not wholly to blame and inexcusable in their nonconformity to the law,* he does here designedly obviate the *objection,* and prove and declare them to be *without any objection from that quarter.* The apostle evidently takes it for granted, that they had sufficient natural powers to capacitate them for the knowledge of God, and he proves that their outward advantages were sufficient; and so he lays the whole blame of their ignorance, blindness, and wickedness upon themselves; and finally sums them up, with the rest of mankind, as having their *mouths stopped,* and *standing guilty before God. Chapter* iii. 19.

afterwards, further light might have been obtained from Israel, God's peculiar people, by the Gentile nations, had they really been desirous of it.

The truth of the case seems, in a few words, to lie here; that if *Adam* had never fell, the works of creation and providence had been the glass in which he himself, and all his posterity, would have beheld the glory of the Lord, from age to age; whereby, *being naturally of a right temper*, they would have been effectually influenced to love him, live to him, delight in him, and praise him for ever; or, in St. Paul's words, *To glorify God as God, and be thankful.* And I suppose that all mankind, still having the same natural powers, and the same outward advantages, are therefore entirely to blame for, and wholly inexcusable in, all their ignorance, blindness, and wickedness; especially considering they perfectly love to be what they are, and hate to be reclaimed, and stand ready to resist the light when offered, and shut their eyes against the truth, from whatever quarter it comes. *The heavens*, still as clearly as ever, do *declare the glory of the Lord, and the firmament showeth his handy work; day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.* Psalm xix. 1. The *natural perfections* of God are clearly to be seen in all his works at the first glance, and his *moral perfections* would be equally evident to an intelligent creature of a right temper at the second thought: And then his glory would immediately shine brighter than the sun, and every heart be ravished with his infinite beauty. But such is our alienation from the Deity in this apostate world, and such the vitiated temper of our minds, that while angels see the divine glory in all his works, (*Rev.* iv. 11.) men, sottish brutish men, though they have eyes to see, see not; but are blind to the manifestations which God makes of himself, *because they do not like to have God in their knowledge.* And now,

3. *As to the heathens being accepted for honestly improving their powers and advantages*, it is, *in the first place*, most certain, from St. Paul's account, that they were at the very greatest distance from doing so. But, *secondly*, if they had done so, yea, if they had discovered so good a temper of mind as perfectly to have conformed to the divine law, yet it is the very scope of all the apostle's reasoning, in the three first chapters of his epistle to the *Romans*, to prove that, *by the deeds of the law no flesh*, neither *Jew* nor *Gentile*, *can be justified.* And

since the law is holy, just, and good, it is not, indeed, *reasonable* that any thing short of sinless perfection, *from first to last*, should pass with the righteous Governor of the world as a condition of acceptance. Future obedience, let it be ever so perfect, can do nothing to make amends for former neglects; as has been already proved in another place. But that which, of itself alone, is entirely sufficient to say in this matter, is, that it is expressly declared, in *Rom.* i. 18. *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness*, (or every breach of the first table,) *and unrighteousness*, (or every breach of the second table of the law,) *of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness*; which words are evidently designed by the apostle to represent the *character* and *state* of the heathen world; for he spends the rest of the *chapter* in enlarging upon this head, showing how the heathen held the truth in unrighteousness, and were exposed to the wrath of God for their *ungodliness* and *unrighteousness*; and he concludes them all *under sin* and *guilty*, and lost for ever, unless they obtain justification *by faith in Christ*. (See *chapter* iii. 9. 19. 20. 30. *verses.*) And thus we see how all mankind have not only sufficient natural powers, but also sufficient outward advantages to know God, and perfectly conform to his law, even the heathen themselves; and that the very reason they do not, is their want of such a temper as they ought to have, and their voluntary, rooted enmity to God, and love to sin*. And now that they are wholly to blame and entirely inexcusable, appears still in a clearer light.

* OBJ. *But it is impossible they should love God with all their hearts, if they have no hopes of finding favour in his sight*; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a REWARDER of them that diligently seek him; *Hebrews* xi. 6.

ANS. *Coming to God*, in *Heb.* xi. 6. evidently implies not only a conformity to the law, but also a compliance with the gospel; i. e. it implies not only a disposition to love God with all our hearts, but also a trusting in him for the divine favour and eternal life upon gospel-encouragements; which gospel-encouragements must, therefore, be understood and believed, or it will indeed be impossible so to trust in him. But I did not say that the *heathen* were under sufficient outward advantages for an evangelical returning to God, which is what is intended in *Heb.* xi. 6. but only for a compliance with the law of nature, which is what is intended in *Rom.* i. 20, 21.

OBJ. *But still is it not, in the nature of things, impossible they should love God, if they have no hopes of finding favour in his sight?*

[illegible] this point, I must make this remark, viz. [illegible] upon the advantages of the heathen suffi- [illegible] no wonder that he so often speaks of the advantages [illegible] professing people as being much more than barely [illegible] even although they enjoy only the outward means [illegible] without the inward influences of the Holy Spirit: for, if the *natural* advantages of the heathen are sufficient, surely the *supernatural* advantages of those who enjoy a *divine revelation*, are much more than sufficient. And if the advantages of those who enjoy *only* a divine revelation are much more than sufficient, no wonder then that those who lived in the days of Moses, Isaiah, and Christ, are represented as very monsters of wickedness, for remaining blind, senseless, impenitent, and unholy, since they enjoyed such *great*, and so *many superadded* advantages. No wonder, therefore, that Moses every where represents the children of Israel as such a stubborn, perverse, stiff-necked, rebellious people, (particularly see *Deut.* ix.) and makes as if their blindness, senselessness, and impenitency, were most unaccountable and inexcusable, since their eyes had seen, and their ears had heard such things, and their advantages had been so great. Deut. xxix. 2, 3, 4. *And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land;* (and that he might set forth the greatness of the things which they had seen, he adds,) *The great temptations which thine*

ANS. Let common sense decide the case: A servant hates his master (a very good man,) without cause, murders his only son, steals a thousand pounds of his money, runs away into a far country, spends several years in riotous living; at length he is caught, brought home to his master, who is a man in authority; before him he has his trial, is condemned, and has no hope of favour. But how does this render it impossible, *in the nature of things*, that he should love his master? Why cannot he love his master now, as well as ever he could? He has the same original grounds of love he used to have: He used to love his master; his master is as worthy of his esteem as ever. He has no cause to esteem his master any the less, because he himself has been such a villain, or because he is doomed to die for his crimes; a punishment justly due. To dislike his master for these things would be perfectly unreasonable. Surely, were he but of a right temper, he could not but take all the blame to himself, and justify his master, and esteem and love him, and be heartily sorry for all his villanies. He can be under no inability, but what must arise from a bad heart. The application is easy

eyes have seen: the signs, and those great miracles, (all which have been enough to melt a heart of stone, and) *yet* (as he goes on to say,) *the Lord* (by all these things which have been so much more than enough,) *hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.* All these means have not to this day attained the end, and made you see, and feel, and know what a God the Lord is, and bring you to love him, and fear him, and walk in all his ways. Moses evidently speaks of it as a very *strange* thing, that they should be blind, senseless, impenitent, and unholy, after such means and advantages; as if they were most inexcusable, yea, under a very aggravated guilt; whereby he plainly takes it for granted, that their advantages had been *much more* than sufficient, had it not been for their want of a right temper, and their wicked obstinacy and perverseness. And yet he mentions none but *outward* means and *outward* advantages, and does not give the least intimation that they had had any *inward* assistance from the Holy Spirit: he does not bring any such thing into the account, but wholly aggravates their sin and their great inexcusableness, from the consideration of their *outward* helps. *Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt,* &c. And no wonder he thought them so very inexcusable, since God looks upon the heathen world without excuse, in that while *the heavens declare the glory of the Lord,* &c. they do not see with their eyes, and perceive with their hearts, and, from a sense of his glory, only thus discovered, love him, and live to him; for, if their advantages are enough, surely the advantages of the Israelites were much, *very much,* more than enough.

And upon the same hypothesis, it is no wonder that God looked upon the case of the children of Israel as he did in the time of Isaiah; who from the days of Moses even to that day, had from age to age enjoyed such outward advantages as they had, and had had such outward means used with them; and in that age, enjoyed so great an outward privilege as the daily prophesying and preaching of Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, and Micah; who, some, if not all of them, prophesied it is very probable *forty* or *fifty* years together at the same time, as we may learn from the first verse in their

several books, which tell us when and how long they prophesied, compared with the account we have of those kings' reigns in the books of the *Kings*, in whose reigns they prophesied; no wonder, I say, God speaks as he does in Isaiah v. 1—7. *My beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill. And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a wine-press therein.* Here is represented the natural powers, and outward advantages of God's people. *And he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?* Here all the blame is entirely laid on themselves, and their conduct is considered as being inexcusably, yea, unaccountably bad. *And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will take away the hedge thereof*, &c. Where nothing can be plainer than that the children of Israel are represented as enjoying sufficient advantages for fruitfulness; yea, advantages much more than barely sufficient; and that their proving as they did, was unspeakably vile and God-provoking, and for which they deserved utter ruin; and for which indeed, God did afterwards, according to his declared design, bring utter ruin upon them. But all those advantages were *outward*; nor is the *inward assistance of the Holy Spirit* any where brought into the account, whenever the greatness of their advantages is set forth on purpose to show how aggravated their wickedness was: but this is constantly the charge, as in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16, 17. *And the Lord God of their fathers sent unto them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending; but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of God arose against his people, till there was no remedy. Therefore, he brought upon them the King of the Chaldees*; not because they did not improve the inward assistances of the Holy Spirit, but because they did not improve their outward advantages; *did not hearken to God's messengers.* And in this

strain their confessions ran, when God, by his grace, had brought them to see what they had done; as in Dan. ix. 5, 6, &c. *We have sinned and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts, and from thy judgments. Neither have we* HEARKENED UNTO THY SERVANTS, THE PORPHETS, *which spake in thy name.* The not *hearkening to them* is mentioned as the great aggravation; but their not improving the inward assistance of the Spirit, is not brought into the account. See *Neh.* ix. 30.

It is evident that the children of Israel, considered as a nation, had not special grace, or the renewing, sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, as one of their advantages, from Jer. xxxi. 31, 32, 33. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant I made with their fathers, in the day I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my* [national] *covenant they brake, although I was as an husband unto them, saith the Lord.) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people;* where the renewing, sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit are mentioned as a peculiar privilege the *Jewish* people were not entitled unto *as a nation,* by that *national covenant* which God entered into with them, as such, at Mount Sinai; (*Exod.* xix. *Deut.* v.) and which afterwards, at the end of forty years, was renewed at the borders of Canaan. *Deut.* xxix. Nor indeed were there any inward influences of the Holy Spirit, at all, promised in that national covenant, as a common privilege, to be by them in common enjoyed. And if they were not entitled to this privilege, as a nation, by their national covenant, then there is no evidence that they, as a nation, did enjoy it; and, therefore, when God speaks as if he had done all for that nation that could be done, he plainly has respect only to *outward means,* which were all that they, as a nation, enjoyed. And as to them, he evidently had good ground so to say; since he had done such great things for them, and sent such prophets among them, and been continu-

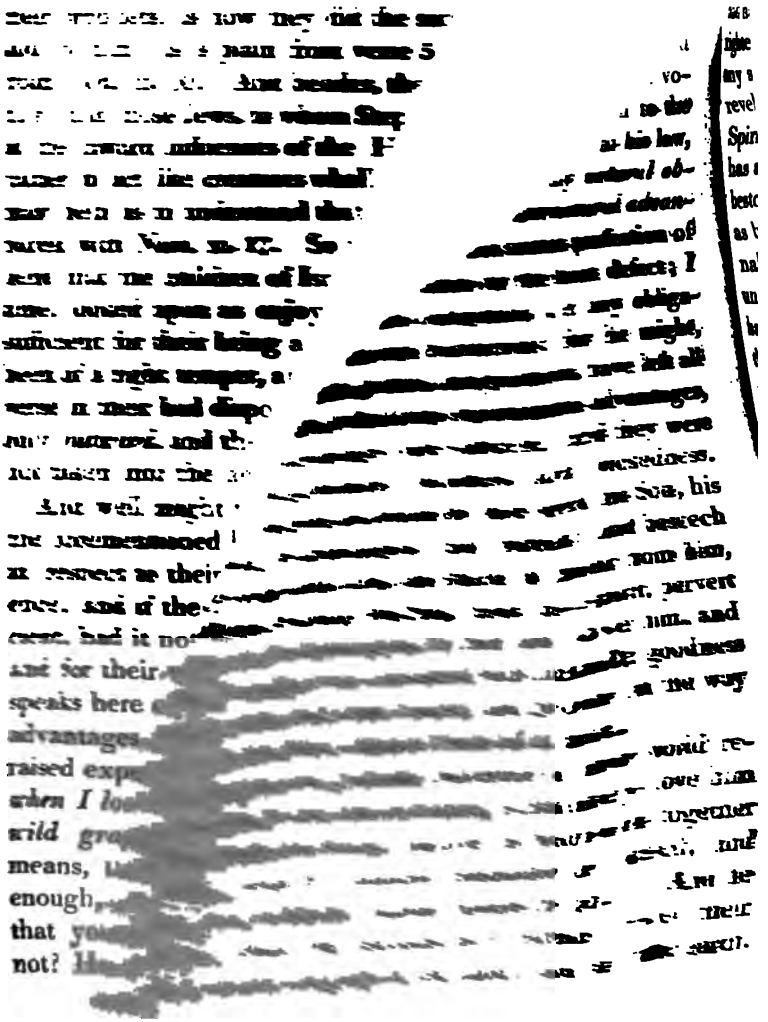
ally taking all pains, from age to age, to make them a holy people: even as we are ready to say concerning the people of a particular parish, where there is a learned, godly, plain, searching, powerful, enlightening, faithful, minister, such as Mr. SHEPARD was in his day, *What more could be done for such a people, that is not done?* And therefore, when Stephen charged the Jews, *that they always resisted the Holy Ghost, as their fathers had done,* (in Acts vii. 51.) he means, that they had always resisted the Holy Ghost, as speaking in and by their prophets, as now they did the same spirit that spake in and by him; as is plain from verse 52, and as is also evident from *Neh.* ix. 30. And besides, there is not the least intimation, that those Jews, to whom Stephen spoke, were under any of the inward influences of the Holy Spirit, but they seem rather to act like creatures wholly left of God. And this hint may help us to understand that phrase in *Neh.* ix. 20. compared with *Num.* xi. 17. So that, from the whole, it is evident that the children of Israel, as a nation, were, in Isaiah's time, looked upon as enjoying *advantages* much more than sufficient for their being a holy and fruitful people, had they been of a right temper, and not so wickedly obstinate and perverse in their bad disposition; and yet their *advantages* were only *outward,* and the *inward influences of the Holy Spirit* are not taken into the account.

And well might their advantages be thus esteemed, upon the forementioned hypothesis: Yea, if all mankind are able in respect to their natural capacities, to yield perfect obedience, and if the advantages of the very heathen were sufficient, had it not been for the want of a right temper in them, and for their very bad disposition, it is no wonder that God speaks here concerning his peculiar people, whose outward advantages were exceedingly great, as if he had had very raised expectations of their being a holy people: *Wherefore, when I looked it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?*—Q. D. "I have done all, as to outward means, that could be done, to make you a holy people; enough, and more than enough; and I looked and expected that you should have been so: and whence is it that you are not? How unaccountable is it? And how great is your wick-

edness! And how great your guilt!" For it is God's way, in the holy scriptures, to speak to men after the manner of men, who are wont to have their expectations of fruitfulness raised, when they sow or plant in a fertile soil, well manured and cultivated. (See *Mat.* xxi. 33—41.) Just so a master is wont to speak to his servant, who is strong, and able for business; "I looked that you should have done such a piece of work, wherefore is it not done? You had time enough, and strength enough;" and that although he knew, in all reason, beforehand, that his servant would not do it, because of his lazy, unfaithful temper; the design of such speeches being to represent the great unreasonableness and inexcusableness of such a conduct.

And finally, upon the same hypothesis, it is no wonder that Jesus Christ represents the people of Chorazin, and Bethsaida, and Capernaum, as enjoying advantages sufficient to have brought even Tyre, and Sidon, and Sodom, to repentance, which, in scripture account, are some of the most wicked cities in the world; and so, consequently, more than barely sufficient to have brought them to repentance, who were, by profession, the people of God; for they had enjoyed the ministry of Christ himself, and seen very many of his mighty works. *Mat.* xi. 20—24. If the advantages of the heathen world are sufficient, well might Christ, speaking after the manner of men, seem to be so confident that Tyre, and Sidon, and Sodom, would have repented, if they had seen his mighty works; and well might he speak as if the people of Chorazin, &c. had enjoyed advantages more than barely sufficient, and lay all the blame of their impenitency upon them; yea, and look upon them as under an aggravated guilt, and give them so heavy a doom. And yet nothing can be plainer than that the advantages which they enjoyed were only *outward*, for no other are brought into the account, as aggravations of their guilt: *Wo unto thee, for if the mighty works which were done in you*, &c. He does not, in the least, intimate as if they had any inward help from the Holy Spirit, but only says he has done *mighty works* among them; yea, in the 25th verse, he plainly declares that they were left destitute of *special grace*.

And thus while with St. Paul, we look upon the advan-



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Psalm cxlvii. 19, 20. "He showeth his word
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e in their non-conformity to the holy law of God.

tages even of the heathen world as sufficient to lead them to the true knowledge of God, and a perfect conformity to his law, but for their want of a good temper, and their voluntary aversion to God and love to sin, we easily see whence it is that the external advantages of those who enjoy the benefit of a divine revelation, together with other outward means of grace, are represented as being much more than barely sufficient; and consequently their guilt in remaining impenitent and unholy, as being doubly aggravated.

And before I leave this point, I must make one *remark* more, namely, that if the advantages of the heathen world were sufficient, but for their want of a good temper, their voluntary aversion to God and love to sin, to lead them to the true knowledge of God, and a perfect conformity to his law, as has been proved, then God was not under any *natural obligations* to grant to any of mankind any *supernatural advantages*, but still might justly have required sinless perfection of all, and threatened eternal damnation for the least defect; I say, God was under no natural obligations, i. e. any obligations arising from his nature and perfections: for he might, consistent with his holiness, justice, and goodness, have left all mankind to themselves, without any supernatural advantages, since their natural advantages were sufficient, and they were obstinate in their ignorance, blindness, and wickedness. Most certainly God was not bound to have sent his Son, his spirit, his word, his messengers, and entreat and beseech those who perfectly hated him, and hated to hear from him, and were disposed to crucify his Son, resist his spirit, pervert his word, and kill his messengers, to turn and love him, and serve him; but might, even consistent with infinite goodness itself, have let them take their course, and go on in the way they were set in, and have damned them all at last.

All that the great and glorious Governor of the world requires of mankind, in the law of nature, is that they love him with all their hearts and souls, and live as brethren together in his world; which is infinitely reasonable in itself, and which they have sufficient natural powers to do. And he has stretched abroad the heavens as a curtain over their heads, which declare the glory of the Lord; and in the earth,

and in all his works, his perfections are clearly to be seen, so that all are under sufficient advantages for the knowledge of him; but mankind hate God, and say unto the Almighty, *Depart from us, for we do not desire the knowledge of thy ways:* and hence they still remain ignorant of God, averse to him, and in love with sin. And now, I say, it is as evident as the sun at noon day, that God might fairly have damned such creatures, without using any more means with them. His law being thus upon a perfect level with their natural powers and natural advantages, he was not obliged, as he was the righteous and good Governor of the world, to grant them any supernatural assistance, either outward, by an external revelation, or inward, by the internal influences of his Holy Spirit: and therefore it is, that the great ruler of the world has always acted sovereignly and arbitrarily in these matters, bestowing these supernatural favours upon whom he pleases, as being obliged to none. Thus he has done as to the external revelation: *Psalm* cxlvii. 19, 20. "He showeth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation, and as for his judgments, they have not known them." And thus he has done as to the internal influences of his spirit. *Mat.* xi. 25, 26. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." And thus God, even to this day, as to both outward and inward helps, *hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and compassion on whom he will have compassion.* He *effectually* sends the gospel to one nation, and not to another; and where the gospel is preached, he, by his Spirit, awakens, convinces, humbles, converts whom he pleases, and leaves the rest.

And thus the objection, from the heathen's not having sufficient outward advantages, has been answered; and, from the answer, I have taken occasion to make these, (I hope,) not unprofitable remarks; and may now return and repeat my former assertion, with still higher degrees of assurance, viz. that mankind are altogether to blame for, and entirely inexcusable in their non-conformity to the holy law of God,

and therefore justly deserve damnation; and that even the heathen, as well as others.

Thus have I endeavoured to show what is the exact measure of love and obedience that God requires of the children of men, and that all mankind have sufficient natural powers and outward advantages, and that all their blindness, ignorance, and wickedness, are voluntary, chosen, and loved. And I have been the larger upon these things, in order to clear up the *justice* of God and his law, and the *grace* of God in his gospel—both which have been sadly misrepresented by those who have not aright understood or well attended to these things. They have said that it is not just in God to require sinless perfection of mankind, or damn any for the want of it. They have said that the law is abated and brought down to a level with (I hardly know what, unless I call it) the vitiated, depraved temper of an apostate world, who both hate God and his holy law, and want an act of toleration and indulgence to be passed in favour of their corruptions, that, at heart, they may remain dead in sin, and yet, by a round of external duties, be secured from damnation at last: And so they have, like the Pharisees of old, (*Mat.* v.) destroyed the law by their abatements; and now the law, only by which is the knowledge of sin, being thus laid aside, they are ignorant of their sinful, guilty, helpless, undone state, and so are insensible of their need of the sovereign grace of God, through Jesus Christ, to save them; and fancy they are well disposed enough to turn to God of their own accord. And having imbibed such notions of religion, they easily see that the better sort of heathen have, for substance, the same religion with themselves, and therefore have equal charity for them: not being really sensible of their need of gospel-grace for themselves, they have full charity for the heathen, who never so much as heard of it. But what I have said is sufficient, I think, to clear the *justice* of God in his law, and the *grace* of God in the gospel, and sweep away this refuge of lies, by which so many gladly quiet their consciences, and wofully deceive their own souls. However, of these things we shall still have something more afterwards.

Thus we have gone through what was proposed; have con-

sidered what was implied in love to God, and from what motives we are to love him, and what measure of love is required: and all that has been said cannot possibly be summed up in fewer or plainer words than these, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; with all thy mind, and with all thy strength:* This is the *first and great commandment;* in conformity whereunto the first and great part of religion does consist. And the *second,* which is *like* unto it, being the foundation of the other half of (this part of,) religion, (now under consideration,) is, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;* which is what we are, in the next place, to proceed to a consideration of.

SECTION IV.

OF LOVE TO OUR NEIGHBOUR.

II. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* In which words we have (1.) the duty required; *Thou shalt love.* (2.) The original, natural ground and reason of it intimated; *Thy neighbour;* which *name,* given to our fellow-men, may lead us to consider them *as being what they are* in themselves, and as sustaining some kind of *character* and *relation* with regard to us. (3.) The rule and standard by which our love to our neighbour is to be regulated; *As thyself.* Here, therefore, we may consider what is implied in love to our neighbour: from what motives we are to love him, and by what standard our love is to be regulated, as to its nature and measure.

FIRST. Let us consider *what is implied* in that *love to our neighbour,* which, by the law of God, is required of us. And, in *general,* it is pre-supposed, or implied, that we have a right temper of mind; an upright, impartial, candid, benevolent temper, even to perfection, without the least tincture of any thing to the contrary; for, without this, we shall not, we cannot, view our neighbours in a true light; nor think of them, nor judge of them, nor feel towards them, exactly as we ought. A wrong temper, a selfish, partial, uncandid, censorious, carping, bitter, stingy, proud temper, will unavoidably give a wrong turn to all our thoughts of, and feeling towards

our neighbours; as is manifest from the nature of the thing, and from universal experience. Solomon observes, that *as a man thinketh, so is he;* and it is as true, that *as a man is, so he thinketh;* for out of the heart, the temper and disposition of the man, proceed his thoughts of, and feelings towards, both persons and things, according to our Saviour. *Mat.* xii. 33, 34, 35. An upright, therefore impartial, candid, benevolent temper, to perfection, without the least tincture of any thing to the contrary, is pre-supposed and implied, in the love required, as being, in the nature of things, absolutely necessary thereto. We must have a right temper, and, under the influence thereof, be perfectly in a disposition to view our neighbours in a right light, and think and judge of them, and be affected towards them as we ought; i. e. *To love them as ourselves.* Particularly,

1. There is a certain *esteem* and *value* for our fellow-men, which, upon sundry accounts, is their due, that is implied in this love. There are valuable things in mankind: some have one thing, and some another; some have gifts, and some have grace; some have five talents, and some two, and some one; some are worthy of a greater esteem, and some less, considered merely as they are in themselves: and then some are by God set in a higher station, and some in a lower, sustaining various characters, and standing in various relations; as magistrates and subjects, ministers and people, parents and children, masters and servants, &c. And there is a certain esteem and respect due to every one in his station. Now, with a disinterested impartiality, and with a perfect candour, and a hearty good-will, ought we to view the various excellencies of our neighbours, and consider their various stations, characters, and relations; and, in our hearts, we ought to give every one his due honour, and his proper place, being perfectly content, for our parts, to be and to act in our own sphere, where God has placed us; and, by our fellow-mortals, to be considered as being just what we are: and indeed, this, for substance, is the duty of every one in the whole system of intelligent creatures. As for God most high, the throne is his proper place, and all his intelligent creatures have their proper places, both with respect to God, and with respect to one

another; which places they are bound to take, and to acquiesce in with all their hearts. We have an instance of this temper, to a good degree, in David: He was sensible that Saul was the *Lord's anointed*, and that it became him to render honour to whom honour is due, and fear to whom fear, and his heart was tender: hence *David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.* 1 Sam. xxiv. 5. This temper will naturally dispose us to feel and conduct *right* towards our superiors, inferiors, and equals; and so lay a solid foundation for the performance of all relative duties. The contrary to all this is a proud and conceited temper, attended with a disposition to despise superiors, scorn equals, and trample upon inferiors; a temper in which men over-value themselves, their friends, and party, and under-value and despise all others. Such do not consider persons and things as being what they are, and think, and judge, and be affected, and act accordingly: Nor do they consider, or regard the different stations in which men are set by God, or the characters they sustain by divine appointment. They are not governed by the reason of things, and the sense of what is right and fit; but by their own corruptions. This was the case with Korah and his company, when they rose up against Moses and Aaron, and said, *Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them.* Num. xvi. 3. Pride makes superiors scornful in their temper, and tyrannical in their government; and pride makes inferiors envious in their temper, and ungovernable in their lives; and it makes equals jealous, unfriendly, contentious. In a word, it lays a foundation for the neglect of all relative duties, and for a general discord and confusion among mankind.

2. We ought not only to consider, esteem, and respect our fellow-men, as being what they are, and, with a perfect impartiality, give them their due, in our very hearts, according to what they are, and to the stations they stand in, being perfectly content, for our own parts, with the place which God has allotted to us in the system, and to be and act in our own proper sphere, and willing to be considered by others as being just what we are; but it is further implied in the love required, that we be *perfectly benevolent* towards them; i. e. that we consider their

happiness as to body and soul, as to time and eternity, as being what it really is, and are, (according to the measure of our natural capacities,) thoroughly sensible of its value and worth, and are disposed to be affected, and act accordingly, i. e. to be tender of it, value and promote it, as being what it is; to long, and labour, and pray for it, and to rejoice in their prosperity, and be grieved for their adversity; and all from a cordial love and genuine good-will; the contrary to which is a *selfish spirit*, whereby we are inclined only to value, and seek, and rejoice in our own welfare, and not care for our neighbour's, any further than we are influenced by self-love and self-interest; which selfish spirit also lays a foundation for *envy* at our neighbour's prosperity, and *hard-heartedness* in the time of his adversity, and inclines us to hurt his interest to promote our own. To love our neighbour as ourselves, makes it *natural* to do as we would be done by; but a selfish spirit makes it *unnatural*. *Malevolence*, *malice*, and *spite*, make it even *natural* to delight in our neighbour's *misery*. And hence it is, that *revenge* is so sweet, and *backbiting* and *detraction* so agreeable in this fallen, sinful world.

3. I may add, that so far as our fellow-men are proper objects of *delight* and *complacency*, so far ought we to take *delight* and *complacency* in them. And hence it is that the godly man feels such a peculiar love to the children of God, for that image of God which he sees in them. The saints are, in his account, *the excellent of the earth, in whom is all his delight*. Psal. xvi. 3. The godly man is of Christ's temper, who said, *Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother*. Mat. xii. 50. But wicked men are of another *taste;* and the things, the tempers, and dispositions in their neighbours, which to them appear excellent, and upon the account of which they delight in them, are odious in God's sight. *Luke* xvi. 15. *For that which is highly esteemed amongst men is abomination in the sight of God;* for it is the temper of wicked men not only to do wickedly themselves, but also to have pleasure in others that do so too. *Rom.* i. 32. Those who are vain, or unclean, or intemperate, suit each other, and take delight in one another's company; while, at

the same time, they distaste and disrelish those things among mankind which are truly most worthy of our delight. In a word, we ought so to esteem others as to be heartily disposed to treat them with all that respect which is their due; and to have such a tender regard for their welfare as to be perfectly disposed, in every instance, and in every respect, to do as we would be done by; and to take notice of all their good properties with that entire friendliness and perfect candour, as may dispose us to take all that delight and complacency in them which is fit. In order unto all which, it is requisite that we be perfectly free from any tincture of pride, selfishness, &c. and have our hearts full of humility, benevolence, candour, and goodness. And now,

SECONDLY. *The motives by which we are to be influenced* thus to love our neigbours as ourselves, are such as these: 1. *It is right and fit in itself.* As the apostle, exhorting children to obey their parents in the Lord, uses this motive, *For this is right.* Eph. vi. 1. The reason of God's requiring of us to love our neighbours as ourselves, is because it is, in its own nature, right that we should; and this ought therefore to move and influence us to do so. There is the same *general* reason why I should love my neighbour, as why I should love myself. Lovely things are as worthy of being loved in him as in me; and, therefore, by me, ought, in all reason, to be loved as much. There is the same reason why my neighbour should be esteemed as being what he is, and according to the station he stands in, as that I should. To esteem myself above my neighbour merely because I am *myself,* without any other reason, is unfit and wrong, at first sight: So to admire my children, my friends, my party, as if there were none such, merely because they are *mine,* is unreasonable and absurd. My very worst enemy ought, by me, to be considered and esteemed as being what he is, with an impartiality perfectly disinterested, as well as my very best friend. Good properties are not at all the better, merely for belonging to me, or to my friends; or the worse, for belonging to my neighbour, or my enemy. But it is right I should view things as they are, and be affected towards them accordingly; indeed, I ought to be so far from a disposition to esteem myself above

others, and to be prejudiced in my own favour, (since I am capable of a much more full and intimate acquaintance with my own sins and follies, than with the sins and follies of others,) that I ought rather to be habitually disposed to prefer others in honour above myself. *Rom.* xii. 10. *Phil.* ii. 3. And so, as to my neighbour's welfare and happiness, there is the same *general* reason why it should be dear to me, as that my own should. His welfare is worth as much, in itself, as mine; it is as worthy, therefore, to be valued, esteemed, sought after, and rejoiced in, as mine. It is true, my welfare is more immediately put under my care by God Almighty, and so it is fit it should by me be more especially taken care of; not that it is of greater worth for being mine, for it is not; but only because it is more immediately put under my care by God Almighty. The same may be said of the welfare of my family, &c.; but still my neighbours' welfare is, in itself, as precious and dear as mine, and he is my neighbour, he is flesh and blood as well as I, and wants to be happy as well as I, and is my brother by *Adam*; we are all but one great family, the offspring of the same common parents; we should, therefore, all be affected as brethren toward one another, love as brethren, and seek each other's welfare most tenderly and affectionately, as being sensible how dear and precious the welfare of each other is; this is perfectly right. And so we should bear one another's burthens; mourn with them that mourn, and rejoice with them that rejoice, as being tender-hearted, cordial friends to every body; and this from a real sight and sense that such a temper and conduct is perfectly right and fit, in the nature of things. And whereas there may be several things in my neighbour truly agreeable, it is evidently right I should delight in those good properties according to their real worth; it is a duty I owe to my neighbour, the possessor, and to God, the giver of those good gifts.

2. But that I should thus love my neighbour as myself, is not only, in its own nature, right, but is also *enjoined upon me by the law and authority of God, the supreme Governor of the world.* So that, from love to God, and from a sense of his right to me, and authority over me, I ought out of obedience to him to love my neighbour as myself, and always, and in

all respects, to do as I would be done by: and not to do so, is not only to injure my neighbour, but to rebel against God, my King and Governor, and so becomes an infinite evil. Hence, it is charged upon David, that, by his conduct respecting Uriah, he had *despised the Lord*, and *despised the commandment of the Lord*; and this is mentioned as the *great evil* of his sin. 2 *Sam.* xii. 9, 10. For he had not merely murdered one of his fellow-worms, but risen up in rebellion against the most high God; and practically said, "I care not for God, nor his authority. I love my lust, and will gratify it for all him." And therefore when David was brought to true repentance, the native language of his soul to God was, *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned.* Psal. li. 4. It is *rebellion*, therefore, it is *despising* the Lord, it is an *infinite evil*, not to love our neighbours as ourselves.

3. We have not only the authority, but also *the example of God, to influence us to this great duty of love and benevolence.* God is love: He has an infinite propensity to do good, and that in cases where there is no motive from without to excite him; yea, where there is every thing to the contrary. He loves to make his sun to rise, and his rain to fall, upon the evil and unthankful. He loves to fill the hearts of all with food and gladness, and to strew innumerable blessings round a guilty, God-hating world; yea, out of his great goodness, he has given his only Son to die for sinners, and offers grace and glory, and all good things, through him; being ready to pardon, and receive to favour, any poor, guilty wretch, that will repent, and return to him, through Jesus Christ. And now for us, after all this, not to love our fellow-men; yea, not to love our very worst enemies, is very vile. Since *God has so loved us, we ought surely to love one another.* 1 John iv. 11. Since he has treated us, his enemies, so kindly, we ought now, as *dear children*, to imitate him and *love our enemies, and bless them that curse us, and do good to them that hate us, and pray for them which despitefully use us, and persecute us.* Mat. v. 44, 45. The infinite beauty in the goodness of the divine nature lays us under infinite obligations to imitate it, in the temper of our minds, and in our daily conduct. And it is ingratitude, it is a shame, it is abominable wickedness, not to love our worst enemies, and

forgive the greatest injuries. Since the great Governor of the world has treated us worms and rebels as he has, one would think that after all this we should never be able to find a heart to hate or injure any mortal; surely, we are under very strong obligations to accept that divine exhortation in Eph. iv. 31, 32. "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from among you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (And chap. v. verse 1.) "Be ye followers of God as dear children." Besides, there are many *additional obligations* to love and benevolence, and to peculiar respect and kindness between *husband* and *wife*, *parents* and *children*, *friend* and *friend*, &c. arising from their mutual relations, and dependencies, and from special kindnesses already received or hoped for. And now,

THIRDLY. *As to the standard by which our love is to be regulated, viz.* Thou shalt love thy neighbour *as thyself*. In order rightly to understand it, we must, 1. Place ourselves, sensibly, as in the presence of the infinitely great and glorious God, before whom all the nations of the earth are nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity; and in the light of God's greatness and glory, we must take a view of our own littleness and deformity, and so learn how we ought to be affected towards ourselves, compared with God; and as we ought to love ourselves, so ought we to love our neighbour. And now, in *general*, we ought to be disposed towards God, as being what he is, and towards ourselves and neighbours, as being what we and they are. *Particularly*, God's honour in the world ought to appear infinitely more valuable and precious than our own, and therefore our own ought to seem as a thing of no worth, compared with his, and as such to be freely parted with when God's honour calls for it; and as free should we be to see the reputation of our dearest friends given up for God's sake. The same may be said of our worldly interest and of all our worldly comforts, when compared with God's interest and the interest of his Son's kingdom in the world, and of the worldly interests and comforts of our dearest friends. All, both ours and theirs, is comparatively nothing, and ought to appear so to us; yea,

our lives and their lives are just the same things; comparatively of no worth, and to be parted with in a moment, without the least reluctance, when God's honour or interest calls therefor. 2. In order to a right understanding of this standard, we must also observe, that our love to ourselves is *habitual, unfeigned, fervent, active,* and *permanent:* so also must be our love to our neighbours. 3. A regular self-love respects *all* our interests, but especially our *spiritual* and *eternal* interest: so ought our love to our neighbours. 4. A regular self-love naturally prompts us to be concerned for our welfare *tenderly,* to seek it *diligently* and *prudently;* to rejoice in it *heartily,* and to be grieved for our calamities *sincerely:* so ought our love to our neighbours to prompt us to feel and conduct with regard to their welfare. 5. Self-love makes us take an *unfeigned pleasure* in promoting our own welfare. We do not think it *hard* to do so much for ourselves; the *pleasure* we take in promoting our welfare *rewards* our *pains.* The same genuine kind of love ought we to have to our neighbour: and so to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, *It is more blessed to give than to receive.* 6. We ought never to speak of our neighbour's sins, or weaknesses, or any way expose him to shame and contempt in the world, in any case whatsoever, except such wherein it would be our duty to be willing ourselves to be so exposed by him, were we in his circumstances, and he in ours. And then we are to do it with that sensible tenderness for him that we could reasonably desire from him, towards us in a like case.

Thus, then, we have briefly considered the second great command of the law, and see what that meaneth—*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* To love God with all our heart, lays a foundation, and prepares the way for us to love our neighbours as ourselves. It removes and takes away those things which are contrary to this love; such as pride, selfishness, worldliness, a narrow, stingy, envious, revengeful temper. True love to God mortifies and kills these things at the root. And, *secondly,* True love to God assimilates us to the divine nature, and makes us like God in the temper of our minds.—But God is love: and the more we are like God, the more are our hearts, therefore, framed to love and benevolence. *He*

that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.—Love to God sweetens the soul, and enlarges our hearts to love our fellow-men. And, *thirdly*, The more we love God, the more sacred is his authority with us, and the more glorious, amiable, and animating does his example appear, and the greater sense have we of our obligations to gratitude to him; all which tends jointly to influence us to all love and goodness towards our neighbours. So that, he that knows God, and loves him, will be full of love to mankind; and, therefore, *he that loveth not, knoweth not God.* 1 John iv. 8. On the other hand, where there is no true love to God, there is no true love to mankind; but the heart is under the government of pride, selfishness, and other corruptions, which are contrary to love. So that a genuine love to mankind is peculiar to the godly. 1 *John* iv. 7, 8.

And now, from what has been said, we may evidently see these following sorts of love to our neighbour are, neither of them, the love required, however nearly they may sometimes seem to resemble it.

1. What is commonly called *natural compassion*, is not the love here required; for the most wicked, profane man, may be of a very compassionate temper: so may the proud, the selfish, the envious, the malicious, and spiteful man—as experience plainly shows. And besides, natural compassion does not take its rise from any sense of the rectitude and fitness of things, or any regard to the divine authority, but merely from the animal constitution: and men seem to be properly passive in it. It is much the same thing in the human, as in the brutal nature: It is, therefore, a different thing from the love here required.

2. The same may be said of what is called *good-nature*: It arises merely from animal constitution, and is not the love here required; for such a man is not influenced in his love by the reason and nature of things, or the authority of the great Governor of the world, or from a consideration of the infinite goodness of the divine nature, any more than the beasts are, who are some of them much better tempered than others: so that this sort of love has nothing of the nature of religion in it. And it is evident that many wicked and ungodly men have

much of this natural good temper, who yet have no regard to God or duty: yea, a secret grudge against a neighbour, reigning in the heart, may be, in the *good-natured* man, consistent with his *good-nature*, but it is not consistent with the love here required; and therefore they are evidently *two* things.

3. That love which is commonly called *natural affection*, is not the love here required. It is true, *that* man is worse than the beasts, who is without natural affection, for they evidenly are not; but every man is not a saint, because he has natural affection: and it is true we owe a peculiar love, according to God's law, to our relatives; but natural affection is not this love: for there are many ungodly wretches, who care neither for God nor his law, who have as much natural affection as any in the world; yea, it is a common thing for ungodly parents to make very idols of their children; for them, they go, and run, and work, and toil, by night and day, to the utter neglect of God and their own souls: and surely this cannot be the very love which God requires. And besides, as natural affection naturally prompts parents to love their children more than God, and be more concerned for their welfare than for his glory, so it is commonly a bar in the way of their loving others as they ought. They have nothing to give to the poor and needy, to the widow and the fatherless; they must lay up all for their children: yea, many times they rake and scrape, cheat and defraud, and, like mere earth-worms, bury themselves in the world; and all this for the sake of their children. And yet all this love to their children does not prompt them to take care of their souls. They never teach their children to pray, nor instruct them to seek after God: they love their bodies, but care little for their souls. Their love to the one is beyond all bounds, but, to the other, is little or nothing: it is an irrational fondness, and not the love required. Indeed, if parents loved their children as they ought to do, their *love* would effectually influence them to take care of their souls, and do all their duty to them—which *natural affection* evidently does not; and therefore it is not that love with which God, in his law, requires parents to love their children: nor, indeed, does there seem to be any more of the nature of true virtue or real religion in the *natural af-*

faction of men, than there is in the natural affection of beasts —both resulting merely from animal nature and a natural self-love, without any regard to the reason and nature of things.

4. Nor is that the love here required, which arises merely from a *party-spirit*; because such a one is of their party, and on their side, and loves those whom they love, and will plead, stand up, and contend for them, and maintain their cause: for such a love is pregnant with hatred and ill-will to every body else; and nothing will humour and gratify it more than to see the opposite party hated, reviled, and blackened: and besides, such a love is nothing but self-love in another shape.—*Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: But I say unto you, love your enemies.* Mat. v. 43, 44.

5. Nor is that the love here required, which arises merely from *others' love to me*: As if a rich man is kind and bountiful to poor people all around him, and appears to love and pity them, they, though almost ever so wicked, will feel a sort of love to him. But if this rich man happens to be a civil magistrate, and is called to sit as a judge in their case, and passes judgment against them for their crimes, now their love dies, and enmity, and hatred, and revenge begin to ferment in their hearts. In this case, it is not the *man* they love, but rather his *kindnesses*: and their seeming love is nothing but a certain operation of self-love. And indeed, however full of love persons may seem to be to their neighbours, if all arises *merely from self-love*, or is for *self-ends*, nothing is genuine: and that, whether things worldly, or things religious, occasion their love. A poor man will love and honour those who are rich, if he hopes to get any thing by it. A rich man may be kind to the poor, with an eye to his credit. An awakened sinner will love an awakening preacher, in hopes he shall be converted by his ministry. A minister may seem to show a world of love to the souls of sinners, and all with an eye to applause. Hypocrites will love a godly minister, so long as he thinks well of them, and happens not to detect their hypocrisy in his public preaching. Even the *Galatians* were very full of love to Paul for a while, so long as they thought he loved them, and had been the instrument of their conversion; yet,

afterwards, they lost their love, and turned his enemies, for his telling them the truth; while others, who loved him truly for what he was, were more and more knit unto him for those very doctrines for which the *Galatians* hated him. *If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not the publicans the same?* Mat. v. 46. There is no virtue nor religion in such a kind of love, and it is evidently *not the thing* required by the divine law. And indeed it is a thing as difficult, and as contrary to corrupt nature, for us genuinely to love our neighbours as ourselves, as it is to love God with all our hearts; and there is as little true love between man and man, as there is between men and God. It is for our interest to love God, and it is for our interest to love our neighbours, and therefore men *make as if* they did so, when, really, there is nothing genuine and true. And, at the day of judgment, when a wicked world comes to God's bar, and their past conduct is all brought to light, nothing will be more manifest than that there never was a spark of true love to God or man in their hearts, but that, from first to last, they were actuated and governed either by their animal constitution, or else merely by self-love.

6. I may add, nor is that the love required, when men love others *merely because they are as bad, and so just like themselves.* Nature and self-love will prompt the worst of men to do so. The vain and profligate love such as are as bad as themselves: and, from the same principle, erroneous persons have a peculiar regard for one another. And the enthusiast and blazing hypocrite may, from the same principle, seem to be full of love to their own sort, though full of malice against all others: and they may think that it is *the image of God* which they love in their brethren, when, indeed, it is only *the image of themselves.* Persons of a *bad taste* may greatly delight in those things in others, which are very odious in the sight of God: but surely this cannot be the love required; and yet, by this very thing, many a hypocrite thinks himself a true saint.

Thus we see what it is to love God with all our hearts, and our neighbours as ourselves, and see these two distinguished from their counterfeits. And so we have gone through the

two great commands of the law, in a conformity to which the very essence of religion does much consist.

And now it is added by our Saviour, *Upon these two hang all the law and the prophets.* The law and the prophets, i. e. the inspired writings of the Old Testament consider these two maxims, *that we must love God with all our hearts, and our neighbours as ourselves,* as *first* and *foundation-principles:* and all the various duties which they urge, respecting God and our fellow-men, are but so many *inferences* and *deductions* from them.

God must be loved with all the heart: and therefore we must make him our God and none else, according to the *first command;* worship him according to his appointed institutions, agreeably to the *second command;* with becoming reverence and devotion, according to the *third;* and that in all such set times as he hath appointed in his word, according to the *fourth.*

Our neighbour must be loved as ourselves: and therefore we must render honour to whom honour is due, according to the *fifth command;* and be tender of our neighbour's life, chastity, estate, and good name, according to the *sixth, seventh, eighth,* and *ninth commands;* and rejoice in his welfare and prosperity, according to the *tenth:* and, in all things, treat him as we could reasonably desire him to treat us, according to that golden rule of Jesus Christ, in *Matthew* vii. 12.

And as all the duties we owe to God and man, are thus, in the *theory,* but so many *deductions,* necessarily flowing from these two *maxims* or *first principles,* so, when the law of God is written in the heart of a sinner by divine grace, and put in his inward parts, there will, from these two principles, naturally flow all duties to God and his neighbour, in his daily practice; i. e. from a disposition to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively, he will naturally be inclined and enabled sincerely to do all his will; to make him his GOD, according to the first command; to worship him according to his own appointments, with becoming reverence, and at all suitable times, according to the rest. It will be his *nature* to do all this; his meat and his drink, and so his greatest delight. And so, also, from a genuine disposition to love

his neighbour as himself, he will be naturally inclined and enabled, in all things, and at all times, sincerely to do as he would be done by. It will be his *nature* to do so; his meat and his drink, and so his greatest delight. *Heb.* viii. 10. *John* xv. 14. 1 *John* ii. 3, 4. *Psalm* xix. 10.

So that, as it is in *theory*, so also it is in *practice*; these two are like the *seed* that virtually contains the whole plant, or like the *root* from which the whole tree grows, with all its branches and fruit. And in proportion as a man loves God and his neighbour with a genuine love, in the same proportion will his inclination and ability, thence arising, be, to do all these duties: and consequently, when his love to God and his neighbour arrives to *perfection*, he will be *perfectly* inclined and enabled to be *perfect* in holiness and righteousness, and will *actually*, in *all* things, *perfectly* conform to both tables of the law. And it is equally evident, that, until a man has a genuine love to God and his neighbour in his heart, he will have neither inclination nor ability, (in a moral and spiritual sense,) to perform one act of true obedience: for as *all true obedience*, according to the law and prophets, is to flow from these two principles, so consequently, according to the law and prophets, *that* is *not true obedience* which *does not*: and, therefore, when all a man's religion is merely from self-love, and for self-ends he cannot be said, strictly speaking, to do *any duty* to God or his neighbour, or *obey one command*; for he only *serves himself*, and that from a supreme love to himself, which the law and the prophets do not require, but *strictly forbid*, in that they enjoin the *direct contrary*.

So that now, in a few words, we may here see *wherein true religion does consist*, as it stands distinguished from all the *false* religion in the world. The godly man, from seeing God to be just such a one as he is, and from a real sense of his infinite glory and amiableness in being such, is thereby influenced to love him supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively: from which inward *frame of heart*, he freely runs the way of God's commands, and is in his element when doing God's will. He eats, he drinks, he works, he prays, and does all things, with a single eye to God, who has placed him in this his world, allotted to him his peculiar station, and pointed

out before him all the business of life: always looking to him for all things, and always giving thanks unto his name, for all his unspeakable goodness to a wretch so infinitely unworthy. And, with a spirit of disinterested impartiality, and genuine benevolence, he views his fellow-men; gives them their places; takes his own, and loves them as himself: their welfare is dear to him; he is grieved at their miseries, and rejoices at their mercies, and delights to do all the good he can, to every one, in the place and station which God has set him in. And he finds that this *new* and *divine temper* is inwrought in his *very nature*; so that, instead of a forced religion, or a religion merely by fits, his *very heart* is *habitually* bent and inclined to such views and apprehensions; to such an inward temper, and to such an outward conduct.

This, this is the religion of the Bible; the religion which the law and the prophets, and which Christ and his apostles too, all join to teach; the religion which Christ came into the world to recover men unto, and to which the spirit of God does actually recover every believer, in a greater or lesser degree. Thus those *who are dead in sin, are quickened*; Eph. ii. 1. *Have the law written in their hearts.* Heb. viii. 10. *Are made new creatures,* all *old things being done away, and all things become new*; 2 Cor. v. 17. And are effectually *taught to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.* Tit. ii 12. *And so serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of their lives*; Luke i. 74, 75.

And *this* is specifically different from every sort of false religion in the world: for all kinds of false religion, however different in other things, yet all agree in this, to result merely from a principle of self-love, whereby fallen men, being ignorant of God, are inclined to love themselves supremely, and do all things for themselves ultimately. All the idolatrous religion of the heathen world, in which some took much pains, had its rise from this principle. They had some notion of a future state; of a heaven and a hell, as well as of temporal rewards and punishments, and so were moved by hope and fear, from a principle of self-love, to do something to pacify the anger of the gods, and recommend themselves to

the favour of their deities: and all the superstitions of the seemingly devout papist; his *pater-nosters*, his *ave-marias*, his *penances*, and *pilgrimages*, and endless toils, still arise from the same principle: so does all the religion of formalists, and legal hypocrites, in the reformed nations. It is a slavish fear of hell, and mercenary hope of heaven, which, from a principle of self-love, sets all a going; yea, the evangelical hypocrite, who mightily talks of supernatural, divine light; of the spirit's operations; of conversion, and a new nature, still, after all, has no higher principle in him than self-love. His conscience has been greatly enlightened, and his heart terrified, and his corruptions stunned: and he has, by the delusions of Satan, obtained a strong confidence of the love of God, and pardon of his sins; so that, instead of being influenced chiefly by the fear of hell, as the legal hypocrite is, he is ravished with heaven; but still, all is from self-love, and for self-ends: and, properly and scripturally speaking, he neither knows God, nor cares at all for him. And this is the very case with every *graceless* man living, of *whatever denomination*; whether a Heathen, or Jew, or Christian; whether Papist, or Protestant; whether Church-man, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, or Separatist; whether a Pelagian, Arminian, Calvinist, Antinomian, Baptist, or Quaker. And this is the case with every *graceless* man living, *whatever his attainments may otherwise be*; though he hath all knowledge to understand all mysteries, and can speak with the tongues of men and angels, and has faith to remove mountains, and zeal enough to give all his goods to feed the poor, and his body to be burned; yet he has no *charity*; he is perfectly destitute of this genuine love to God and his neighbour, and has no higher principle in his heart, from which all his religion proceeds, but a supreme love to himself. For, ever since our first parents aspired to be as gods, it has been the *nature* of all mankind to love themselves supremely, and to be blind to the infinite beauty of the divine nature; and it remains so to be with all, until renewed by divine grace: so that self-love is the highest principle from which unregenerate men do ever act, or can act.

Here, therefore, we have true religion; a religion specifically different from all other sorts of religion in the world, standing in a clear view: yea, and we may be absolutely certain that this is the very thing which has been described: for this conformity to the moral law is, throughout all the Bible, by Moses and the prophets, by Christ and his apostles, represented to be the very thing in which the essence of religion originally consists. "Blessed be the name of the Lord for ever, who has given us so clear a revelation of his will, and so sure and certain a guide as his word." Come here, all you poor, exercised, broken-hearted saints, that live in this dark benighted world, where many run to and fro, and where there are a thousand different opinions, and every one confident that he is right; come here to the law and to the testimony; come here to Christ himself, and learn what the truth is, and be settled; be confirmed, and be established for ever; and remember, and practise upon those words of Jesus Christ, in John vii. 17. *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.* O, read the Bible; live lives of prayer and communion with God; yea, die to yourselves, the world, and sin, and return home to God through Jesus Christ; and love him, and live to him, and delight in him more and more; and be more and more disinterested and impartial; sincere and fervent, in your love to your neighbours; do all the good, to every one, that you can; in a word, be the servants of God, and grow up into his image, and your certainty of divine truths will proportionably strengthen and increase: for the more your understandings are free from that darkness and prejudice that sin has introduced, the clearer will you view divine truths, and the greater sense will you have of their inherent divine glory; and so your belief of their divinity will be the more unshaken.

Having thus gone through with what was proposed, *a general improvement* of the whole is all that now remains: and, indeed, much use may be made of these great truths, which have been thus explained and proved, for our *instruction* in some of the most controverted points in religion, and to *clear up* the believer's gracious state, and also to promote *our humiliation*, and *thankfulness*, and *universal obedience*.

SECTION V.

RIGHT APPREHENSIONS OF THE LAW USEFUL TO CLEAR UP SOME OF THE MOST CONTROVERTED POINTS IN RELIGION.

USE I. *Of instruction.* We have seen what the law of God requires, and the infinite obligations we are under perfectly to conform to it; we have seen wherein a genuine conformity to the law consists, and how a genuine conformity to it differs from all counterfeits; and what has been said may help us to understand the following particulars:

1. *Wherein consisted the moral image of God in which* Adam *was created.* That *Adam* was created in the image of God, is expressly affirmed in Gen. i. 27. *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.* And from these words we have just the same reason to believe that *Adam* was created in the *moral,* as that he was in the *natural* image of God; because they tell us in plain terms, without any distinction or exception, (nor is there any that can be gathered from any other text,) that he was created in the *image of God;* but the *moral* as well as the *natural* perfections of God are equally contained in *his image.* As to the *political* image of God, *Adam,* strictly speaking, was not created in that; because, as the scriptures inform us, it was *after* his creation that he was made *Lord* of this lower world; *Gen.* i. 28. And it is, I think, with less propriety, that *this* is, by *divines,* called the *image* of God; I do not know that it is any where so called in scripture; and God was the same he is now, before he sustained the character of supreme Lord and Governor of the world. His *natural* and *moral* perfections comprised his whole image before the world was created: and in this *his image* was his creature, man, created; not in part of his image, for there is no such intimation in all the Bible; but in *his image,* comprising his *moral,* as well, and as much, as his *natural* perfections.

Now, the *moral image* of God does radically consist in a *temper of mind* or *frame of heart* perfectly answerable to the *moral law;* the *moral law* being, as it were, *a transcript of*

the moral perfections of God. So that, from what has been said of the nature of the moral perfections of God, and of the nature of the moral law, we may learn wherein consisted that moral image of God in which *Adam* was created. He had a *perfect moral rectitude* of heart; a perfectly *right temper* of mind, and so was perfectly disposed to love God with all his heart, and his neighbours, (if he had had any,) as himself; was perfectly disposed to give God his place, and take his own; and consider God as being what he was, and be affected, and act accordingly; and to consider his fellow-men, (if he had had any,) as being what they were, and feel and act accordingly: and in this image of God was he created, as the scriptures teach us; i. e. he was brought into existence with such a temper *connatural* to him.

Now here is a new-made creature in a new world, viewing God, and wondering at his infinite glory, looking all round, astonished at the divine perfections shining forth in all his works. He views the spacious heavens; they declare to him the glory of the Lord: He sees his wisdom and his power; he wonders and adores: He looks around upon all his works; they clearly discover to him the invisible things of God, even his eternal power and godhead; and he stands amazed. God makes him Lord of this lower world, appoints to him his daily employment, and puts him into a state of trial, setting *life* and *death* before him: and he sees the infinite wisdom, holiness, justice and goodness of God in all; he falls down and worships; he exults in God, and, with all his heart, gives up himself to God with sweetest delight;—all is genuine, natural, and free, resulting from the native temper of his heart.

Here he beheld God in his infinite glory, viewed his works, contemplated his perfections, admired and adored him with a sweetness and pleasure of soul most refined! Here he saw God in all the trees, plants, and herbs in the garden, his happy seat, while, out of love to God and duty, he attended his daily business; he ate and drank, and blessed his great benefactor! He saw that it was infinitely reasonable that he should love God with all his heart, and obey him in every thing, if eternal life had not at all been promised; both because God infinitely deserved it at his hand, and also in doing

thereof there was the greatest satisfaction and delight. And he saw that if he, in any thing, should disobey his sovereign Lord and rightful Governor, it would be right, infinitely right, that he should be miserable for ever, even if God had never so threatened; because to disobey *such a God* appeared to him an infinite evil. He looked upon the promise of eternal life as a mere free bounty. He looked upon the threatening of death as impartial justice: and while he considered *eternal life* under the notion of a REWARD promised to perfect obedience from God, his Governor, he saw his infinite love to righteousness therein, as well as his infinite bounty. And while he considered *death* under the notion of a PUNISHMENT threatened against sin, he saw God's infinite hatred of iniquity therein, as well as his impartial justice. And when he saw how God loved righteousness and hated iniquity, and beheld his infinite goodness on the one hand, and impartial justice on the other, he was ravished. Now he saw plainly what God was, and his infinite glory in being such, and loved him with all his heart. It was *natural* to account such a God infinitely amiable, and it was *natural* to love him with all his heart; all was genuine and free, resulting from the *native temper* of his mind.

These being his views and apprehensions, and this his nature, hence, although he was under a covenant of works, yet the hopes of happiness and the fears of misery were not the *original* and *first spring* of his love to God: it was not originally from self-love, and for self-ends, but from a sense of the beauty of the divine nature; and so it was not forced and hypocritical, but free and genuine: it did not feel like a burden, but it was esteemed a privilege; and, instead of being disposed to think it MUCH to love God with all his heart, and obey him in every thing, he rather thought it infinitely *right* and *fit*, as being God's *due*, and that he deserved no thanks from God, but rather was under infinite obligations to give thanks to God for ever, for such an infinite *privilege*. And thus we see wherein that *moral image* of God consisted in which *Adam* was created.

2. From all which, *it is a plain matter of fact, that we are born into the world entirely destitute of the moral image of*

God: so certain as that the moral image of God radically consists in such a temper, and makes it natural to have such-like views and dispositions; so certain we are in fact born without it. Look into children, and there is nothing to be seen of these things. And we are all sure that such a temper and such-like views and dispositions are not natural to us; yea, most men are sure there is still no such thing in them, and very many believe there is no such thing in the world. *We are,* in fact, *born like the wild ass' colt,* as senseless of God, and as void and destitute of grace: we have *nature,* but no grace; a *taste* for *natural good,* but no *relish* for *moral beauty;* an *appetite* for *happiness,* but *no appetite* for *holiness;* a heart easily affected and governed by selfish considerations, but blind to the moral rectitude and fitness of things. And so we have a heart to love ourselves, but no heart to love God; and may be moved to act by selfish views, but cannot be influenced by the infinite moral beauty of the divine nature. *That which is born of the flesh is flesh,* (John iii. 6.) and will only mind and relish things which suit its nature, (*Rom.* viii. 5.) but is blind to spiritual things. 1 *Cor.* ii. 14. True indeed, in children there are many *natural excellencies*; many things pleasing and agreeable. In a good mood, they appear loving and kind, innocent and harmless, humble and meek; and so does a lamb. There is nothing but *nature* in these appearances: it is owing to their animal constitution, and to their being pleased and humoured: It is all from no higher principle than self-love. Cross them, and they will presently feel and act bad enough. They have, in their temper and most early conduct, no regard to God or duty, or to the reason and nature of things, but are moved and affected merely as things please or displease them, making their happiness their last end. And, indeed, if the image of God, holiness, or grace, or whatever we call it, be really such a thing as has been said, then nothing of such a nature can possibly be more plain and evident than this universally is, that mankind are, in fact, born into the world destitute, entirely destitute thereof. *Job* xi. 12. And hence, we must *be born again.* John iii. 3. 6.

OBJ. *But where, then, was the propriety of Christ's saying, in Mat.* xviii. 3. Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven? *Is it not here supposed that little children are patterns of humility and goodness?*

ANS. And where was the propriety of those words in *Isaiah* liii. 7. where the prophet, speaking of Christ's meekness and patience under his sufferings, says, *As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth?* Is it not here supposed that *sheep are patterns of meekness and patience?* The truth is, that these allusions do not prove that either sheep or little children naturally have any real humility or meekness, of a gracious nature, but only an appearance of it: and just of the same nature are those phrases in *Mat.* x. 16. *as wise as serpents, as harmless as doves.* But as these scriptures do not prove that *sheep*, and *serpents*, and *doves*, have grace, so neither does that other text prove that *little children* naturally have it.

3. By comparing ourselves with the holy law of God, as it has been already explained, we may also learn that we are born into the world, not only destitute of a conformity to the law, but that we are *natively diametrically opposed to it in the temper of our hearts.* The law requires us *to love God supremely*, but the native bent of our hearts is to *love ourselves supremely.* The law requires us *to live to God ultimately*, but the native bent of our hearts is *to live to ourselves ultimately.* The law requires us *to delight in God superlatively*, but the native bent of our hearts is *to delight in that which is not God, wholly.* And, finally, the law requires us *to love our neighbours as ourselves*, but the native bent of our hearts is *to be inordinately selfish.*

These are the earliest dispositions that are discovered in our nature: and although I do not think that they are concreated by God together with the essence of our souls, yet they seem to be the very first propensities of the new-made soul. So that they are, in a sense, *connatural;* our whole hearts are perfectly and entirely bent this way, from their very first motion. These propensities, perhaps, in some sense, may be said to be *contracted*, in opposition to their being strictly and philosophically *natural*, because they are not created by God

with the essence of the soul, but result from its native choice, or rather, more strictly, are themselves its native choice. But most certainly these propensities are not *contracted* in the sense that many vicious habits are; namely, by long use and custom. In opposition to *such* vicious habits, they may be called *connatural*. Little children do very early bad things, and contract bad dispositions; but these propensities are evidently antecedent to every bad thing infused or instilled by evil examples, or gotten by practice, or occasioned by temptations. And hence, it is become customary to call them *natural*, and to say that it is our *very nature* to be so inclined: and to say that these propensities are *natural*, would to common people be the most apt way of expressing the thing; but it ought to be remembered that they are not *natural* in the same sense as the *faculties* of our souls are: for they are not the workmanship of God, but are our native choice, and the voluntary, free, spontaneous bent of our hearts. And to keep up this distinction, I frequently choose to use the word *native*, instead of *natural*.

And now, that these dispositions are, as it were, thus born with us, is as evident from experience, as any thing of this kind can be; for these are the earliest dispositions that man's nature discovers, and are evidently discovered before little children are capable of learning them from others. Yea, it is plainly the very native bent of their hearts to love themselves above all; to make their ease, comfort, and happiness, their last end and their all, and to seek for all from the *creature*, or, in other words, *from that which is not God*. This is plain to every one's observation; nor did I ever hear any one, as I remember, venture to deny it.

And as children grow up, and their natural powers enlarge, so these propensities grow up, and strengthen, and become more active, and discover themselves plainer; and from this root, this evil fountain, many bad things soon proceed. Observe children through all the days of childhood, and this nature may be easily seen in them; they discover it in all their conduct in ten thousand instances; and there it does and will remain. We may break them of many bad tricks which they learn, and bad habits which they contract, but we cannot

change this principle of their nature. They are disposed to love themselves supremely, seek their own ends ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly; nor can we turn this bent of their hearts. We can, after a sort, instill good principles into them, learn them to read and pray; and, after a sort, to honour their parents, and love their neighbours: we can make them civil, and sober, and humble, and modest, and religious, in a sort, but still their *old nature* remains in its full power. It is restrained, but not altered at all; yea, and after all, these their native dispositions have the entire government of them; their whole hearts are as much bent this way as ever: and these propensities govern them in their inward temper, and in all their conduct. They do all from self-love, and for self-ends, and are seeking happiness, not in God, but in something else. These things are plain to every impartial observer; nor can they be denied by any. Thus *we are all shapen in iniquity, and in sin are we conceived:* and *we are transgressors from the womb, and go astray as soon as we are born.*

And if we leave children, and look into ourselves, we may easily observe that we are naturally of the same temper; inclined to love ourselves supremely, and do all from self-love, and for self-ends, and seek for happiness, not in God, but in something else. We can remember when and how we contracted many other vicious habits, and feel some inward power to get rid of them; but these propensities we have always had, and they are natural, and our whole hearts are so in them, that it is not in us so much as sincerely to desire to be otherwise. It is true, we may, in a sort, desire and try to alter this our nature, from considerations of duty, of heaven and hell; but it is all hypocrisy, for we still act merely from self-love, and for self-ends, as much as ever. We have naturally no disposition to desire to love God, only for self-ends; all men are conscious to themselves that this is true.

We are naturally *entirely under the government* of these dispositions, in *all things*, and under *all circumstances:* in ALL THINGS; in all our civil and religious concerns. It is merely from self-love, and for self-ends, that natural men follow their worldly business, and endeavour to live peaceably with

their neighbours; and, in these things, they are seeking blessedness. And it is merely from self-love, and for self-ends, they do any thing in religion; either they mean to be seen of men, or are moved from a slavish fear of hell and mercenary hope of heaven, or from some other selfish consideration.—And, UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, we are naturally under the government of these dispositions. *In prosperity*, then, from an inclination to love ourselves supremely, seek our own happiness ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly, it is our nature to rejoice and be glad: and, from the same inclination, we are disposed to mourn, and murmur, and be discontented *under adversity*. At the *Red Sea* it was natural for the Israelites to sing praises; at the *bitter waters* it was as natural to murmur. When we are pleased, then we are glad; when we are crossed, then we are sad; but, naturally, we do not care how it goes with God's interest in the world; what becomes of his great name, or whether his honour sinks or swims: no, there is but here and there a *Moses* that cares any thing about this; but, if they can have their own wills, and secure their own interests, they are content. While the Spirit of God lets sinners alone, and they live secure and unconcerned, then, from the aforesaid propensities, they are after the world; one after one thing, and another after another; and, although they may keep up a form of religion, for fashion sake, yet, really, they care nothing about God and things eternal. When they come to be awakened to a concern for their souls, though they reform their lives, and takevery different courses from what they used to do, yet still all is from the same principle, and for the same end. They have new lives, but the same nature: They do not really care for God or his glory, any more than they used to do, nor take any content in him; but are only after pardon of sin, and peace of conscience, which, according to their present sensations and apprehensions, they think would make them happy.—Sinners do not really seek for blessedness in God himself, but in something they hope to receive from him. And hence, when awakened sinners come to get false comfort; think they are pardoned, and so have peace; or think that Christ loves them, and that they shall go to heaven, and so are filled

with joy; as all their joy results from self-love merely, so all they rejoice in is what they think they have received, and what they hope yet to receive; but they do not really care for God himself, (whose glory they never saw,) any more than they used to do; nor rejoice in him: and hence, (ordinarily,) having their consciences quieted, they soon go back to the world again for real comfort and blessedness. Or if, after false comfort, they turn enthusiasts, and get to *blazing*, and wax hotter and hotter, and seem to be full of nothing but love to God, and zeal for his glory, it is visions and dreams, revelations and impulses, a firm persuasion they are the peculiar favourites of heaven, and the applause of their party, which they live upon and take comfort in, and by which they are animated; and all from self-love, and for self-ends: but, in deed and in truth, they neither know God, nor regard him nor his glory, nor live upon him, nor delight in him, any more than they used to do: and thus, in all things, and under all circumstances, unregenerate men are governed by a disposition to love themselves supremely, live to themselves ultimately, and delight in that *which is not God* wholly. And whosoever is well acquainted with mankind may easily see that this is, in fact, the very case, and will naturally be led to make the same observation with the apostle Paul, in Phil. ii. 21. *All seek their own, and not the things which are Jesus Christ's.*

And now this disposition, which is thus evidently natural to all mankind, *is directly contrary to God's holy law, is exceeding sinful, and is the root of all wickedness.* First, it is diametrically opposite to God's holy law: for this requires us to love God supremely, and seek his glory ultimately; in direct contrariety whereunto, we are naturally inclined to love ourselves supremely, and live to ourselves ultimately. Again, the law requires us to delight in God superlatively, and choose and live upon him as the only portion of our souls; in direct contrariety whereunto, we are naturally inclined to place our whole hearts upon other things, and live upon them, and take content in them. Finally, the law requires us to love our neighbour as ourselves, and do as we would be done by; in direct contrariety whereunto, we are naturally inclined to be inordinately selfish, and so not to do as we would be done

by. And thus we are all naturally *gone out of the way, and, in the temper of our own minds, become corrupt, filthy, and unprofitable, and there is none righteous; no, not one.* Psalm xiv. Rom. iii. 10—19. We have lost the image of God; we have lost a right temper of mind; we have lost a governing sense of the moral fitness of things; have no eyes to see moral beauty, or hearts to taste and relish the moral excellency of spiritual and divine things. 1 *Cor.* ii. 14. Hence in God we can see no form nor comeliness, nor in him at all delight; yea, it is natural for it to seem to us as if there was no God. *Psalm* xiv. 1. And now, as though in very deed there were no God for us to be in subjection unto, we set up for ourselves, to make our own interest our last end, and to seek blessedness, not in God, but in something else; and are naturally inclined, without any regard to God's law, to make our own wills our only rule; and now, having cast off the government of God, and forsaken the fountain of living waters, we go every one his way, one to his farm, another to his merchandize, all *serving divers lusts and pleasures.* So that it might justly be wondered at, how any among mankind should ever have it enter into their hearts, to imagine that we are not fallen creatures, universally depraved, when it is, so evidently, a plain matter of fact. I think it can be owing to nothing but men's ignorance of the law, in its spiritual nature, purity, strictness, and extent, and their not comparing themselves therewith: and indeed St. Paul tells us that this is the case; Rom. vii. 8. *For without the Law sin was dead.* For did men but rightly apprehend that God is such an one as the law speaks him to be, and that he requires us to be what really he does, they could not possibly but see their native contrariety to God and his holy law. The Israelites of old felt their contrariety to to their prophets, and they hated them, and put them to death; and the Pharisees felt their contrariety to Christ and his apostles, and hated them, and put them to death; for they perceived what their prophets, and what Christ and his apostles, were driving at: but yet, all the while, they imagined they loved God, and loved his law, because they neither knew God, nor understood his law: and even so it is at this day: If an *Arminian,* or *Pelagian,* (for, after all

their pretences, they are, by nature, just like the rest of mankind,) did but verily believe God just such an one as the godly man, in fact, sees him to be, he would feel as great a contrariety to him, and enmity against him, as any *Calvanist* ever supposed there was in natural men. They frame a false image of God in their own fancies, to suit the vitiated taste of their corrupt hearts, and then cry, *We are not enemies to God; no, but it is natural for us to love him:* when all the while their native aversion to God will not so much as suffer them to believe that there is *any such Being* as *really* he is. But, to proceed,

The aforesaid disposition, and bent of heart, which is thus directly contrary to the law, *is exceedingly sinful.* For while we love ourselves supremely, and live to ourselves ultimately, we do really, in our hearts, and by our practice, prefer ourselves above God, as if we were more excellent and worthy: in which we cast infinite contempt on the Lord of glory, inasmuch as all the nations are, in his sight, but as a drop of the bucket, and small dust of the balance, and we compared with him, are less than nothing, and vanity. He is of infinite majesty, greatness, glory, and excellency, and all heaven adore him in the most humble prostrations; and yet we, *mean* worms of the dust, yea, *vile* worms of the dust, that deserve every moment to be spurned to hell, even *we* esteem and love ourselves more than we do him, and are more concerned for our interest than for his honour; yea, care not at all for him, or his honour, nor would ever so much as pretend to it, if not excited thereto from the expectation of self-advantage: and that, even although we receive life and breath, and all things from him, and his right to us is original, underived, perfect, and entire. Surely this is infinite wickedness! and besides in being and doing so, we affront his sacred authority, whereby, as Governor of the world, he commands us to love him with all our hearts. And further, while we are inclined to take our whole delight in that which is not God; to forsake him, the fountain of living waters, the ocean of all good, and seek comfort and content elsewhere; we hereby prefer the world above God, prefer our wives and children; our houses, and lands, and pleasures, above God—or, at best,

we prefer (an imaginary) heaven above God: to do either of which, casts infinite contempt upon the Lord of glory; the delight of angels; the joy of the heavenly world. The Psalmist said, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is nothing on earth I desire besides thee.* Psalm lxxiii. 25. And well might he say so: but to be inclined, when we are secure in sin, and not terrified with hell, to love and desire any thing upon earth more than God; and, when under terrors and fearful expectations of wrath, to desire pardon, peace, and (an imaginary,) heaven, and any thing to make us happy, but God himself, is surely infinitely vile. We do hereby prefer that which is not God, above God himself, as if it was really of more worth; and so cast infinite contempt upon the ocean of blessedness, and fountain of all good. And besides, in this, as well as the former particular, we go directly contrary to the express command of the great governor of the whole world. Finally, to be disposed to an inordinate, (and so to a groundless,) self-love, and to be swallowed up in selfish views and designs, instead of a tender love, and cordial benevolence to all our fellow-men, loving them as ourselves, is evidently contrary to all the reason and nature of things, and to the express command of God, which is infinitely binding; and so this also is infinitely sinful. And thus these, our native propensities, are directly contrary to the holy law of God, and exceedingly sinful.

But here it may be inquired: "If a disposition to love ourselves supremely, live to ourselves ultimately, and to delight in that *which is not God* wholly, be so exceedingly sinful, whence is it that men's *consciences* do not any more *accuse* and *condemn* them therefor?" To which the answer is plain and easy; *for this is evidently owing to their intolerably mean thoughts of God.* Mal. i. 6, 7, 8. *A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: If, then, I be a father, where is mine honour? And if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name: and ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name? Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar;* (and so ye despise me:) *and* (yet) *ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee?* (I answer,) *In that* (in doing so) *ye* (practically) *say, the table of the Lord is*

contemptible: (and so you treat me with contempt.) And yet their consciences did not smite them, and therefore the Lord adds; *And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil?* (or, am I so mean and contemptible, that to do so ought not to be looked upon as an affront? I appeal to the common sense of mankind.) *Offer it now unto thy Governor, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Lord of hosts;* (and if your Governor will take it as an affront, much more may I,) *for I am a* GREAT KING, *saith the Lord of hosts,* (ver. 14.) Here it is plain that it was their mean and contemptuous thoughts of God which made them think it would do to turn him off any how, and with any thing: and just so it is in the case before us: men's thoughts of God are infinitely mean: he is very contemptible in their sight; and hence, although they love themselves, their own honour and interest, above the Lord and his glory, and prefer other things, and take more delight in that which is not God, than in God himself, yet they say, "Wherein do we despise the Lord, affront his majesty, or cast contempt upon him? We pray in secret and in our families; we go to meeting and to sacrament, and help to support the gospel; and is not all this to honour the Lord? And wherein do we despise him?" Just as if going into your closet twice a day, to quiet your conscience, and saying over the old prayer, by rote, in your family, that you have repeated morning and evening ever since you kept house; and, in a customary way, going to meeting and to sacrament, and paying your minister's rate, (and, it may be, not without grudging,) just as if *this* was an *honouring* of God, when, at heart, you do not love him one jot, not care for his honour and interest at all, nor would do any thing in religion but for the influence of education and common custom, or from legal fears and mercenary hopes, or merely from some other selfish consideration: Yea, just as if this was an *honouring* of God, when, all the time, you cast such infinite contempt upon him in your heart, as to give your heart to *another;* to that which is not God; to yourself, and to the world! Let a woman treat her husband so, will he be pleased with it, and will he accept her person? If she does not love her husband

at all, or delight in his person, or care for his interest; if she loves another man; has a separate interest of her own, and does nothing for her husband but to serve her own views, will he now think she is a *good wife*, because morning, noon, and night, she prepares his food, though she does it carelessly, the victuals always cold and poorly dressed, hardly fit to eat; and he knows it is all from want of love? And besides, she thinks she does a *great deal* for him, and expects her *pay*, like a *hired maid!* and she says to her husband, "Wherein do I despise you? Am not I always doing for you?" And she does not feel herself to blame, because her husband looks so mean and contemptible in her eyes: and she cares so little for him, that any thing seems good enough for him, while, all the time, her adulterous heart is doating on her lovers. "You do not love me," says her husband, "but other men have your heart, and you are more a *wife* to them than to me:" But, says she, "I cannot love you, and I cannot but love others;" and now she seems to herself not to blame. So, a wicked world have such mean thoughts of God, that they cannot love him at all, and have such high thoughts of themselves, that they cannot but love themselves supremely: they have such mean thoughts of God that they cannot delight in him at all; but they see a glory in other things, and so in them they cannot but delight wholly: And because they are habitually insensible of God's infinite glory, hence they are habitually insensible of the *exceeding sinfulness* of these native propensities of their hearts. So that we see that mean, contemptuous thoughts of God are the very foundation of the peace, and quiet, and security of men, in a mere form of religion. If they did but see *who the Lord is*, they could not but judge themselves and all their duties to be infinitely odious in his sight. *Psalm* l. 21, 22. *These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest I was altogether such an one as thyself; but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes: Now consider this, ye that forget God.* Men have such mean thoughts of God, and so little regard him, that they are naturally inclined to *forget* that there is a God, and to feel and act as if there were none. Hence (*Psalm* xiv. 1.) *The fool saith in his heart, there is no God;* i. e. he is inclined to feel and act

as if there was none; and, therefore, it is added in the next words, *Corrupt are they.* So, the children of Eli who treated the worship of God with great contempt, are said *to despise the Lord, and kick at his sacrifice;* and yet their consciences did not smite them: and the ground of all was, *their mean, contemptuous thoughts of God.* 1 Sam ii. 12. 29, 30. *The sons of Eli were sons of Belial, they knew not the Lord.* And thus we see that our native disposition to love ourselves supremely, live to ourselves ultimately, and delight wholly in that which is not God, is, (whether we are sensible of it or not,) directly contrary to God's holy law, and exceedingly sinful. And I add,

This native bent of our hearts *is the root of all sin,* (the *positive* root, I mean, in opposition to a mere *privative,* cause,) of all our inward corruptions and vicious practices: both of those which are contrary to the *first* and to the *second table* of the law; of those which more immediately affront God, and of those which more especially respect our neighbour.

From this root arises all our evil carriage *towards the Lord of glory.* This is the root *of a spirit of self-supremacy,* whereby we in our hearts, exalt ourselves and our wills above the Lord and his will, and refuse to be controlled by him, or be in subjection unto him. Jehovah assumes the character of most high God, supreme Lord, and sovereign Governor of the whole world, and commands all the earth to acknowledge and obey him as such; but we are all naturally inclined, Pharaoh-like, to say, *Who is the Lord, that we should obey him? we know not the Lord, nor will we do his will.* And hence mankind, all the world over, break God's law every day, before his face; as if they despised his authority in their hearts. And when he crosses them in his providences, they, as though it was not his right to govern the world, quarrel with him, because they cannot have their *own wills,* and go in their *own ways.* This was always the way of the children of Israel, those forty years in the wilderness, whose whole conduct exemplifies our nature to the life, and in which glass we may behold our faces, and know what manner of persons we naturally are. Men love themselves above God, and do not like his law, and hence are inclined to set up their wills above and against his, and if

they can they *will* have their wills, and go in their ways, for all him; and if they *cannot*, they will quarrel with him. And hence the apostle says, *their carnal mind it enmit against God; is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be.* Rom. viii. 7. And from this root, arises *a spirit of self-sufficiency and independence*, whereby we are lifted up in our own hearts, and hate to be beholden to God; and, having different interests and ends from him, naturally think it not safe, and so, upon the whole, not liking to trust in him, choose to trust in ourselves, or any thing rather than him. We have a better thought of ourselves than of God, as knowing we are disposed to be true to our own interests and ends, and therefore had rather trust in ourselves than in him; and besides, we naturally hate to come upon our knees to him for every thing. Hence, that in *Jer.* ii. 31. is the native language of our hearts: *We are lords, we will come no more unto thee.* We love to have the staff in our own hands, for then we can do as we will; and hate to lie at God's mercy, for then we must be at his control; yea, we had rather trust in any thing than in God, he being, of all things, most contrary to us. And hence, the Israelites, in their distress, would one while make a covenant with Assyria, and then lean upon Egypt; yea, and rob the treasures of the temple to hire their aid, rather than be beholden to God. Yea, they would make them gods of silver and gold, of wood and stone, and then trust in such lying vanities, rather than in the Lord Jehovah. *And as face answers to face in the water, so does the heart of man to man.* Prov. xxvii. 19. This is our very nature.

Again, from the same root arises a *disposition to depart from the Lord*; for other things appear more glorious, and excellent, and soul-satisfying than God; wherefore the hearts of the children of men secretly loathe the Lord, and hanker after other things, and so go away from God to them. Job xxi. 12. 14. *They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ. Therefore they say unto God, depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.* Mal. iii. 14, 15. *It is in vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? We call the proud happy.* Meditation and

prayer are a burden to men; they had rather be almost any where than in their closets, because they secretly loathe the Lord: but in other things they find comfort: one in his farm, and another in his merchandize: the young man in his frolics, and with his merry companions: the old man in his wife, and children, and cattle, and swine, and house, and lands: the rich man in his riches: the ambitious man in his honours: the scholar in his books: the man of contemplation in his nice speculations; and, in any thing, men can take more comfort than in God himself. That which angels and saints in heaven, and believers on earth, prize above all things, men have naturally the least account of. Psal. lxxiii. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is nothing on earth I desire besides thee.* Jer. ii. 5. 11, 12, 13. *Thus saith the Lord, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and become vain? Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? But my people have changed their glory, for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this. They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.*

And, from the whole, we may see there is the greatest contrariety between the nature of God and the nature of the sinner: and hence God hates sinners, (*Hab.* i. 13.) and sinners hate him, (*Rom.* viii. 7.) and when sinners come to die, and go into the eternal world, they will *feel* then that they hate him, though their nature *then* will be just the same as it is *now*; and they will then know that the great reason they did not *feel* their hatred of him in this world, was because they did not *think* nor would *believe* that he was *such an one.*

And hence we may see whence it is that we are so averse to right apprehensions of God, and whence it is that our insensibility of his glory, in being what he is, is so invincible, *viz.* because he is, in his very nature, in such perfect contrariety to us, and we to him; for to account that infinitely glorious in being what it is, which is of a nature perfectly contrary to us, is as unnatural as to account ourselves infinitely hateful in being what we are; for *that* necessarily implies *this.* So far, therefore, as sinners love themselves for being

what they are, so far do they hate God for being what he is; and so far as they hate God for being what he is, so far their insensibility of his infinite glory, in being just such an one, is invincible. And now, since men naturally perfectly love themselves for being what they are, and consequently perfectly hate God for being what he is; hence, their minds are, naturally, perfectly prejudiced against the true knowledge of God, and perfectly averse from, and unsusceptible of a sense of his infinite glory in being just what he is. And hence it is, that neither God's word nor works, nor any thing but his almighty spirit, can make men, in their hearts, both really give into it that God is just such an one as he is, and infinitely glorious in being such. The heavens may declare the glory of the Lord, and make the invisible things of God clearly to be seen; and the scriptures and ministers may proclaim his greatness and glory, and the honour of his majesty; but sinners, in seeing, will not see, and in hearing, will not hear and understand, for they do not like to have God in their knowledge. They hate the light, and love darkness; they hate to think that God should be such an one: can see no glory in him in being such; secretly wish he was another kind of a being; dread to think that he is what he is, and will not, if they can help it. *John* iii. 19, 20. *Rom.* i. 28. *John* viii. 46. 47. That God should love himself more than he does his sinful creatures, and value his own honour and interest more than he does our happiness, and look upon it as an infinite affront that we are not exactly of the same mind, and judge us worthy of eternal damnation therefor; and, as high Governor of the world, make such a law, and bind us to it to do so; how can this suit a proud rebel, that only loves himself and his own interest, and cares not for God at all? How can a carnal, selfish heart delight in such a God, and account him infinitely glorious in being such? How can he rejoice to hear that he sits King for ever, and does all things according to the counsel of his own will, aiming ultimately at his own glory? Or how can he imagine that such a conduct, so directly cross to his temper, is infinitely right and becoming, glorious and excellent? The temper, the *bad* temper of sinners' hearts, is that which renders their insensi-

bility of God's glory, in being what he is, so invincible. He does not suit them; he does not look upon things as they do; he is not disposed, nor does he act as they would have him, but all directly contrary; as contrary as light and darkness; as sin and holiness; as heaven and hell: therefore, *the carnal mind is enmity against God.* But, to return,

From this same root; this disposition to love ourselves supremely, live to ourselves ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly, *proceeds all our evil carriage towards our neighbour.* Pride, selfishness, and worldliness, lay the foundation for all that cheating, lying, backbiting, quarrelling, there is among neighbours; and for all the feuds and bloody wars there ever have been among all the nations of the earth, from the beginning of the world. And pride, selfishness, and worldliness, together with that enmity against God and true religion, which is naturally concomitant, lay the foundation for all those bloody persecutions which have been, in the several ages of the world, against the church and people of God. If men were not proud nor selfish, they would have no inclination to injure their neighbours, in name or estate. If they took their supreme delight in God as the portion of their souls, they would not have any of their little petty idols to quarrel and contend about: If they loved their neighbours as themselves, there would never more be any thing like persecution; and all injuries and abuses would cease from the earth. So that, to conclude, as a disposition to love God with all our hearts, and our neighbours as ourselves, is an habitual conformity to the whole law, and lays a solid foundation for a right carriage towards God and our neighbour, in all things; so a disposition to love ourselves supremely, live to ourselves ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly, is an habitual contrariety to the whole law, and lays a sad foundation for all evil carriage towards God and our fellow men. And, as I said, this disposition is natural to us, and we are naturally entirely under the government of it: and so the seed and root of all sin is in us, even in the native temper of our hearts. *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh.*

OBJ. *But if mankind neither love God nor their neighbours with a genuine love, such as the law requires, but naturally*

have, and are entirely under the government of, a spirit of contrariety to the whole law, whence is it that all men do not blaspheme God, and do all the mischief they can, and, in practice as well as in nature, be as bad as devils?

ANS. Because of the *restraints*, which God, for wise ends and purposes, is pleased to lay upon them, whereby their nature is, indeed, not at all altered, but only, in a measure, kept from breaking out, as otherwise it would do. And these restraints, in ordinary, are such as arise from these things: (1.) From their *animal constitution*; whereby many are inclined to be tender-hearted, compassionate, and kind, without any regard to God or duty, from a sort of natural instinct, much of the same nature to all appearance, as is to be found in many in the brutal world. (2.) Form *natural affection*; whereby, partly from animal nature, and partly from self-love, and from being brought up together, relatives have a certain fondness for one another, and so are disposed to be kind to one another, and that without any regard to God or duty: much as it is with many in the brutal world. (3.) From a *good education*; whereby many are influenced to be civil in their behaviour, honest in their dealings, kind to the poor, and to pray in their families, and join with the church, &c. though destitute of grace in their hearts. (4.) From *worldly considerations*; whereby, from self-love, in order to avoid punishment from men, or from fear of disgrace and reproach, or to get the good-will of others, or promote some worldly interest, men are influenced, sometimes, to carry themselves externally very well. (5.) From *religious considerations*; whereby, from self-love, the fear of hell, and the hope of heaven, many are influenced to do much in religion. (6.) *Want* of *speculative knowledge* of GOD; ignorance of his resolution to punish sin, and of his anger against them, is also an occasion of their not blaspheming his name; as they will do, as soon as ever they come into eternity, and see how things really are; though then their nature will be exactly the same that it is now. God gives rain and fruitful seasons, and fills the hearts of all with food and gladness; he makes his sun rise, and rain fall upon the evil and unthankful, and offers salvation in case they repent and believe; whence men are ready to think that God loves

them, and this restrains them. These, and suchlike things, restrain men's corruptions; but for which, they would be as bad in this world as they will be in the next, when these restraints come to be taken off.

To what has been said, may also be added, that God, by these three methods, does much to restrain many: (1.) *By his providence;* whereby he many times brings remarkable judgments upon men for their sins; and remarkably prospers men, as to the things of this world, who are true to their word, and honest in their dealings: and hereby men are afraid to be and do as bad as otherwise they would, lest some judgment should come upon them; and others are influenced to be honest, and to carry themselves, externally, well, in hopes of a worldly blessing. (2.) *By his word,* his written word, and his word preached; whereby men are made more sensible that there is a heaven and a hell; and so are the more restrained and kept in awe. (3.) *By his spirit;* whereby he does much to make many a man sensible of the evil of sin, the dreadfulness of damnation, and the glory of heaven, whom he never sanctifies: whereby they are not only restrained from vicious practices, but their corruptions also are greatly stunned, and they made zealous promoters of religion. (*Heb.* vi. 4.) And thus the supreme Governor of the world restrains men's corruptions, and maintains some degree of order among his rebellious subjects.

But yet, all these restraints notwithstanding, there is, and always has been, abundance of wickedness committed in this apostate world. They have murdered God's servants, the prophets, whom the Lord has sent unto them, rising early and sending; and they have killed his Son, and his apostles, and shed the blood of thousands and millions of his saints. So great has been their aversion to God, and so great their cruelty! And by the many wars there have been among the nations, from the beginning, the whole earth has been filled with blood. And by cheating, and lying, and backbiting, and contention, &c. *hateful and hating one another,* innumerable injuries have been done to, and unspeakable miseries brought upon, one another. And as soon as ever mankind have their restraints taken off at death, without having any sin infused into their

ill appear to be what they are; they will feel
ry *devils.*

mean while, by means of these restraints, many
themselves; for our corruptions being thus capable of
restrained, and, as it were, stunned, and our lives of be-
etty well regulated, to appearance, while our nature re-
ains the same, and we feeling ourselves able to do conside-
towards this; hence many are deceived, and take this
eal religion, and think they did, and that others may
rt themselves, with but comparatively little assistance
God's spirit. And truly so they might, if this was true re-
n, and conversion consisted in thus reforming our lives,
d restraining our corruptions. But, in conversion, our very
nature must be changed, (2 *Cor.* v. 17.) the native bent of
our hearts must be turned, (*Ezek.* xxxvi. 26.) and from this
we are naturally wholly averse. And hence arises the abso-
lute necessity of a supernatural, irresistible grace, in order to
our conversion; of which more afterwards. But to return,

From what has been said, we see that we are natively dis-
posed to love ourselves supremely: to live to ourselves ultimate-
ly, and delight in that which is not God, wholly; and that this
disposition, by which we are naturally, entirely governed, in
all things, and under all circumstances, is in direct contrariety
to the holy law of God, and is exceedingly sinful, and is the
root of all sin; of all our evil carriage towards God and man,
in heart and life. So that, as to have a disposition to love
God with all our hearts, and our neighbour as ourselves, is a
radical conformity to the whole law; so this contrary disposi-
tion is a radical contrariety to the whole law. Well, there-
fore, may the holy scriptures speak of sinners as being *dead in
sin*, and *at enmity against God*, and, *by nature, children of
wrath*, and represent them so frequently as being *enemies to
God*, (*Eph.* ii. 1. 3. *Rom.* viii. 7. and v. 10. 2 *Cor.* v. 18—
20.) since, by comparing ourselves with the holy law of God,
we are found to be, *in fact*, natively so, in the temper of our
minds. And it will be for ever in vain for mankind to plead
not guilty, since the law of God is *what it is*, and *we are what
we are*; for by the law, *by which is the knowledge of sin*, we
evidently stand condemned.

Here it may be *objected*, "That we are, natively, *no otherwise than God makes us*; and if, therefore, we are natively sinful, God made us so; and, by consequence, is the *author of sin*." But this *objection* has been already obviated; for, as has been observed, God only creates the naked essence of our souls: our natural faculties: a power to think, and will, and to love and hate; and this *evil bent* of our hearts *is not of his making*, but is the *spontaneous propensity* of our *own wills*; for we, being born devoid of the divine image, ignorant of God, and insensible of his glory, do, of *our own accord*, turn to ourselves, and the things of time and sense, and to any thing that suits a graceless heart, and there all our affections centre; from whence we natively become averse to God, and to all that which is spiritually good, and inclined to all sin. So that the *positive* corruption of our nature is not any thing created by God, but arises *merely* from a *privative* cause.

Here it will be *objected* again, "That it is not consistent with the divine perfections to bring mankind into the world under such sad and unhappy circumstances."—*But who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou formed me thus?* It is blasphemous to say, that it is not consistent with the divine perfections to do what God, IN FACT, does. It is a plain *matter of fact*, that we are born into the world devoid of the divine image, ignorant of God, insensible of his infinite glory. And it is a plain *matter of fact*, that, in consequence hereof, we are natively disposed to love ourselves supremely, live to ourselves ultimately, and delight in that which is not God, wholly. And it is plain to a demonstration, that this temper is in direct contrariety to God's holy law; is exceedingly sinful, and is the root of all wickedness. *Now*, to say it is not consistent with the divine perfections that mankind should be brought into the world, as, IN FACT, they are, is wickedly to fly in the face of our almighty Creator, and expressly charge him with unrighteousness; which, surely, does not become us. If we cannot see into this dispensation of divine providence, yet we ought to remember, that God is *holy in all his ways, and righteous in all his works*, and that *the judge of all the earth always does right*. I do not

mean that things are *therefore* right, *merely* because God does them; for if they were not right to be done, antecedently to his doing of them, he would not, he could not do them. But I mean, that when it is *a plain matter of fact*, that God does such a thing, we may thence conclude that it is most certainly right for him to do so, although we cannot understand *how* it is. We ought to remember that he is infinite in his understanding, and at one comprehensive view, beholds all things, and so cannot but know what is right, and what is wrong, in all cases; and his judgment is unbiassed; the rectitude of his nature is perfect; he cannot, therefore, but do right always, and, in all instances, govern the world in righteousness. But our minds are narrow and contracted: we are but of yesterday, and know nothing; and besides, our judgments are biassed through our mean thoughts of God, and high thoughts of ourselves; and hence we may be easily mistaken: especially in this case, our minds are sadly biassed, and it is almost impossible for us to consider the matter with a spirit of disinterested impartiality. And these considerations ought to check our rising thoughts, and make us lie down in the dust before the great, and righteous, and good Governor of the world, with humble silence, even although we cannot understand his ways. And I believe that a humble disposition of heart would lay an effectual foundation for us to come to be satisfied in this matter: it being our mean thoughts of God, and high thoughts of ourselves, which blinds our minds that we cannot see, and disposes us to quarrel with our Creator, and find fault with the Ruler and disposer of the world. It is true, that the holy scriptures consider mankind as being what they are, and say but little about the way in which they came to be in such a condition: and there is good reason for it; for it is of infinitely greater importance that we should know what a condition we are in, than how we came into it: and it is a foolish thing for us, and contrary to common sense, to lay the blame any where but upon ourselves, since we are *voluntarily* such as we are, and really *love* to be what we are: do not sincerely desire to be otherwise, but are utterly averse from it. But yet the holy scriptures say so much about the way of our

coming into our present condition, as might fully satisfy our minds, were not our judgments biassed; for from them we learn, that *man was made upright; was created in God's image,* and, by *rebelling against his Maker, brought a curse upon himself and all his race;* Gen. i. 27. Eccles. vii. 29. Rom. v. 12. 19. *There* we read, that *by one man, sin entered into the world; that by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners: that by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation.* Adam was created in the image of God: it was connatural to him to love God with all his heart, and this would have been our case, had he not rebelled against God; but now we are born devoid of the divine image, have no heart for God, are transgressors from the womb: *by nature children of wrath.*

And if any should inquire, "But can it be right that Adam's sin should have any influence upon us?"

I *answer*, It is a plain case that it *actually* has, and we may depend upon it that the Judge of all the earth always does right. And besides, why might not God make Adam our public head and representative, to act in our room, as he has since, for our recovery, made his *own Son* our public head and representative? *Rom.* v. 12—21. He had as much *right, power,* and *authority,* for one as for the other: and was not Adam as likely to remain obedient as any of us should have been, and, in some respects, more likely? His natural powers were ripe; he stood not only for himself, but for all his race; a whole world lay at stake: and if he had kept the covenant of his God, and secured happiness to all his race, should we not for ever have blessed God for so good a constitution? Never once should we have questioned God's *right* and *authority* to make him our public head and representative, or have thought that it did not become his wisdom and goodness to trust our all in his hands. And if we should thus have approved this constitution, had Adam never sinned, why might we not as justly approve it now, if we would be but disinterestedly impartial? It is the same, in itself, *now,* that it would have been *then;* every way as holy, just, and good. "Oh, but for God to damn a whole world for one sin?" But stay; does not this arise from mean thoughts of God, and high

thoughts of yourself? O, think who the Lord is! and what it is for a worm to rise in rebellion against him! and how he treated whole thousands of *glorious angels* for their first sin! and then, think how God drowned the *old world*, burnt *Sodom*, and of the dreadful things he intends to do to the impenitent at the day of judgment! and learn, and believe, that sin is an infinitely greater evil than we naturally imagine.

But I must return to my subject, for it is not my present business so much to show *how we came into this condition*, as plainly to point out *what that condition is, which we are actually in*. As to this, the whole scriptures are very plain; but especially the *law, by which is the knowledge of sin*, clearly discovers what our case is, and beyond dispute, proves that *all are under sin*. And having already, by comparing ourselves with the law, found out what our nature is, I proceed to make some further observations, in which I design greater brevity.

4. From what has been said, we may learn *that the very best religious performances of all unregenerate men are*, complexly considered, *sinful, and so odious in the sight of God*. They may do many things *materially good*, but the *principle, end*, and *manner* of them are such, as that, *complexly considered*, what they do is *sin* in the sight of God: For *sin is a transgression of the law*. But,

(1.) The law requires all mankind to do every duty out of love to God, and for his glory: but all unregenerate persons, *directly contrary to law*, do every duty merely out of love to themselves, and for self-ends; and so *are guilty of rebellion*.

(2.) The law requires all mankind to do every duty out of love to God, and for his glory: but all unregenerate persons do every duty merely out of love to themselves, and for self-ends; whereby they *prefer themselves*, and *their interest, above God* and *his glory*; and so, *are guilty of spiritual idolatry*.

(3.) The law requires all mankind to do every duty from love to God, and for his glory: but all unregenerate persons do every duty merely from self-love, and for self-ends; and yet *hypocritically pretend* to God, that they *love* and *obey him*; and so *are guilty of mocking God*.

(4.) The law supposes that God *infinitely deserves* to be loved with all our hearts, and obeyed in every thing, and that our neighbour *deserves* to be loved as ourselves; and that, therefore, if we should yield perfect obedience in all things, yet we should *deserve no thanks*: but all unregenerate persons make *much* of their duties, though such miserable, poor things; and so, *affront God to his very face.*

Upon these *four accounts*, their very best performances are done in a manner directly contrary to the law of God, and so are sinful, and therefore odious in the sight of God. (*Prov.* xv. 8. xxi. 27. *Rom.* viii. 8. *Psalm.* lxxxviii. 36, 37.) As is the tree, so is the fruit; as is the fountain, so are the streams; and as is the man, so are his doings, in the sight of God, who looks at the heart, (*Mat.* xii. 33, 34, 35.) and judges not according to appearance, but judges righteous judgment; and with whom many things, that are highly esteemed among men, are abomination.

And if their best religious performances are thus odious in the sight of God, it is certain that they cannot possibly, in the nature of things, have the least tendency to make amends for their past sins, or recommend them to the divine favour; but rather tend to provoke God still more. So that *it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy.* Nor is there the least hope in the sinner's case, but what arises from the sovereign mercy of God; whereby he can *have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and have compassion on wohm he will have compassion.* Rom. ix. 15. 18.

True, some, being ignorant of the law, and of our entire contrariety to it, have fancied a goodness in the sinner's duties; and hence have persuaded themselves that there are promises of special grace made to them. Not that there are any promises in scripture of that nature; for the scripture every where considers us as being, while unregenerate, *dead in sin,* Eph. ii. 1. *Enemins to God,* Rom. v. 10. 2 Cor. v. 17—20. Col. i. 21; yea, *enmity against him,* Rom. viii. 7. and so far from any true and acceptable obedience to God, as that we *are not* nor *can be* subject to the law, and so *cannot please God,* Rom. viii. 7, 8. and every where represents such as being under *the wrath of God; the curse of the law,* and *a*

present condemnation. John iii. 18—36. Rom. i. 18. Gal. iii. 10. But the real ground of their opinion is, their ignorance of the sinner's sinful, guilty circumstances, and their fond conceit that there is some real goodness in what the sinner does: both which are owing to their ignorance of the law,* and of the nature of true holiness. *Rom.* vii. 8, 9. *Rom.* x. 3. All will own, that if sinners' duties are such as I have represented, it is absurd, and even inconsistent with the divine perfections, that promises of special grace should be made to them.

It is true they refer to Mat. xxv. 29. *To him that hath, shall be given.* But that text evidently speaks of the final rewards which shall be given to the godly at the day of judgment; when all the unregenerate shall, with *the slothful servant, be cast into outer darkness.* They quote also Mat. vii. 7. *Ask and you shall receive,* &c. But the condition of this promise was never yet performed by an unregenerate sinner. For this *asking* is meant *right asking;* for those who *ask amiss,* receive nothing. *James* iv. 3. *Right asking* of grace, supposes *right desires* of it; but the unregenerate are, in the habitual temper of their hearts, directly contrary to grace and all spiritual good, and entirely so, as has been proved. But to have *genuine desires* after a thing, and a *perfect contrariety* to it, in the whole heart, at the same time, is an express contradiction. The reason that sinners many times *think* that they *love* holiness, and *desire heartily and sincerely* to be *made* holy, is, that they, being ignorant of the nature of true holiness, have framed a *false image* of it in their own fancies. Did they but distinctly know *the very thing itself,* their native contrariety to it could no longer be hid. *Rom.* vii. 8, 9. So the Pharisees thought they loved God, and loved his law;

* It is manifest that this notion of the promises, of which *Pelagius* was the author, and which was condemned for heresy above 1300 years ago, did with him, and does, with his followers, take its rise, originally, from their ignorance of the nature and meaning of the moral law. But yet some good men may have been inadvertently led into this error by the force of education. I believe men's hearts may be sometimes better than their heads: but when a false scheme of religion does perfectly suit a man's heart, and express the temper of his mind, then no doubt, he is graceless. 2 *John* ix. *John* viii. 47. The above notion of the promises perfectly suits a self-righteous heart.

although, at the same time, they perfectly hated the Son of God, who was the express image of his Father, and came into the world to do honour to his Farther's law. They had wrong notions of God, and of his law.

OBJ. *But this tends to drive sinners to despair.*

ANS. Only to despair of being saved by their own righteousness, which they must be driven to, or they will never submit to be saved by free grace through Jesus Christ. *Rom.* vii. 8, 9. x. 3.

OBJ. *But if these things be true, there is not any motive to excite a poor sinner to reform, or pray, or read, or do any thing.*

ANS. By which it is plain, that a sinner cares not a jot for God, and will not go one step in religion, only for what he can get: and if such a sinner had ever so many motives, he would only serve himself, but not serve God at all. And what encouragement can God, consistent with his honour, give to such an one, since he merits hell every moment, even by his best duties, but only that which St. Peter gave to Simon Magus? Acts viii. 22. *Repent and pray to God if* PERADVENTURE *the* wickedness *of thy heart may be forgiven thee.*

OBJ. *But this way of reasoning will make sinners leave off seeking and striving, and sit down discouraged.*

ANS. Not if sinners are but effectually awakened to see how dreadful damnation is; for a bare *who can tell?* will make such resolve to run, and fight, and strive, and beg, and pray, till they die; and if they perish, to perish at God's foot: and as for others, all their courage arises from their not seeing what wretched, miserable, sinful, guilty creatures they are; and so must be dashed to pieces, sooner or later, in this world or the next, whenever their eyes come to be opened. And if God ever, in this world, shows them what they are, they will thereby perceive what danger they are in: and *now* a mere *who can tell?* will make them also resolve to run for eternal salvation, till their very last breath. It is best that false confidence should be killed; and this way of reasoning does not, in the least, tend to hurt any other. It is best that sinners should know the worst of their case; and this way of reasoning does not tend to make it appear a jot worse than it is.

Obj. *But what good does it do for sinners to be in such earnest to reform, read, watch, pray, run, fight, strive, as for their lives, since all they do is sin, and God will have mercy* only *on whom he will have mercy?*

Ans. (1.) It is less sin to do these things, than not to do them.

(2.) Sinners never will be in such earnest, only when God comes to awaken and convince, and so to make them effectually sensible of the dreadful state they are in; and it is not any discouragements that can keep them from being in such earnest *then*, so long as the least hope appears in their case. Other people care but little about eternal things, and do but very little in religion, but what education, custom, the fashion, and their worldly interest, excite them unto. Most people think it so easy a thing to be saved, as that they look upon such great concern and earnestness as perfect frenzy.

(3.) This great earnestness of awakened sinners makes them try their strength to purpose; whereby they come to be experimentally convinced that it is not in their hearts to love God, be sorry for sin, or do any thing that is good; whereby the high conceit they used to have of their ability and good nature is brought down, and they feel and find that they are enemies to God, and dead in sin: and hereby a foundation is laid for them to see the justice of God in their damnation, and so the reasonableness of God's having mercy only on whom he will have mercy. And thus, the law, though it *cannot give life*, yet is a *school-master to bring men to Christ:* and thus the main good the awakened sinner gets, by going to this *school-master*, is effectually to learn his need of Christ, and of the free grace of God through him. *Rom.* vii. 8, 9. *Gal.* iii. 21—24. This is the great end God has in view, and this end all the sinner's earnest strivings are well calculated to obtain.

5. From what has been said, we may learn *the nature of a saving conversion, and the manner wherein it is wrought.* Conversion consists in our being recovered, from our present sinfulness, to the moral image of God; or which is the same thing, to a real conformity to the moral law: but a conformity to the moral law consists in a disposition to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superla-

tively; and to love our neighbour as ourselves; and a practice agreeable thereto. And therefore conversion consists in our being recovered from what we are by nature, to such a disposition and practice.

And now, in order to such a glorious renovation and recovery, God by his spirit sets home the law upon the sinner's heart, causing him to see and feel, to purpose, just how he has lived, and what he is, and what he deserves, and how he is in the hands of a sovereign God, and at his disposal; whereby the hinderances which were in the way of his conversion, are, in a sort, removed. Rom. vii. 8, 9. *For without the law, sin was dead: For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.* And then God, *who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines in the heart, and gives the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* 2 Cor. iv. 6. And now a sense of the glory of God and divine things being thus imparted to the soul by the spirit of God, and the sinner being raised up from spiritual death to spiritual life, does return home to God through Jesus Christ, venturing his soul and immortal concerns upon the free grace of God, and through him gives up himself to God, to be his for ever, to love him supremely, live to him entirely, and delight in him superlatively, and for ever to walk in all his ways: and hereby, at the same time, the man's heart begins to be habitually framed to love his neighbour as himself, with a disinterested impartiality; and thus an effectual foundation is laid for universal external obedience, and that from genuine principles.

And as the divine life is thus begun, so it is carried on in the soul much after the same manner. The spirit of God shows the believer, more and more, what a poor, sinful, hell-deserving wretch he is in himself, and so makes him more and more sensible of his absolute need of free grace, through Jesus Christ, to pardon and to sanctify him. He grows in a sense of these things all his days; whereby his heart is kept humble, and Christ and free grace made more precious. The spirit of God shows the believer more and more of the infinite glory and excellency of God, whereby he is more and more influenced to love him, live to him, and delight in him with

hi nd, by the whole, his heart is framed more and s neighbour as himself: and thus *the path of like a shining light, that shines more and more, to ject day*; (Prov. iv. 18.) only it must be observed, that spirit's operations, after conversion, are attended with differences, arising from two causes: (1.) From the *different state* of the subject wrought upon. The believer not being under the law as a covenant, is not, by the spirit, filled those legal terrors arising from the fears of hell, as here- he was, (*Rom.* viii. 15.) but only is made sensible of remaining sinfulness, and the sinfulness and desert of sin, of God's fatherly displeasure; and hereby his heart is humbled and broken. Indeed, hereby he is many times filled with unspeakable anguish and bitterness of soul. *His sins are ever before his eyes, and his bones wax old through his roaring all the day long.* Psalm xxiii. 3. li. 3. *He is troubled; he is bowed down greatly; he goes mourning all the day long.* Psalm xxxviii. 1—6. But these awakening, convincing, humbling, mourning, purifying times, always end in peace and joy, and rest in God; attended with a greater degree of tenderness of conscience and holy watchfulness, and followed with bringing forth more fruit. *Psalm* xcvii. 11. cxxvi. 5, 6. *Psalm* xxxii. 5. lxxiii. 25 28. *John* xv. 2. 2 *Cor.* vii. 10, 11. *Heb.* xii. 11. *Hos.* ii. 6, 7. 14, 15. (2.) From the *different nature* of the subject wrought upon. The believer not being under the full power of sin, and at perfect enmity against God, as once he was, hence does not resist the spirit with the whole heart, while he takes down the power of sin, as heretofore he did; but has a genuine disposition to join in on God's side, and say, "Let me be effectually weaned from the world, and humbled, and made holy and heavenly, and be brought into an entire subjection to God in all things, though by means and methods ever so cross to flesh and blood: let me be stripped naked of all worldly comforts, and let *Shimei* curse, and all outward evils and inward anguish of heart come upon me, if nothing else will do. Here, Lord, I am in thy hands; chasten, correct, do what thou wilt with me, only let sin die; sin, thine enemy, the worst evil, and the greatest burden of *my* soul." *Rom.* vii. 24. 2 *Cor.* iv. 8, 9. 16. *James*

i. 2. *Psalm* cxix. 71. *Heb.* xii. 9. And he is not o nly thus willing that God should, by any methods, take down the power of sin in the heart, but also joins in with the methods of divine grace, and, by watching and praying, and by fighting and striving, seeks the death of every corruption: and from his thus joining in on God's side against the *flesh*, he is said, in scripture, *to crucify it*, Gal. v. 24. and *to work out his own salvation*. Phil ii. 13.

From what has been said under this head, we may see that a saving conversion differs very much from the conversion of these *four* sorts of men: (1.) *The worldly hypocrite;* who makes a profession of religion; does many things; appears zealous, and pretends to be a good man, merely from worldly considerations, and to be seen of men. *Mat.* xxiii. 5. (2.) *The legal hypocrite;* whose conversion is nothing else but a leaving off his vicious practices, and turning to be strict and conscientious in external duties, in hopes thereby to make amends for his past sins, and recommend himself to God; and so escape hell, and get to heaven. *Rom.* x. 3. (3.) *The evangelical hypocrite;* whose conversion was nothing else but this: he was awakened to see his sins, and terrified with fear of hell, and humbled, in a measure, but not thoroughly; but great light broke into his mind, and now he believes that Christ loves him, and has pardoned all his sins, and so is filled with joy and zeal, and is become quite another man; but still has no grace. *Mat.* xiii. 20. *Heb.* vi. 4. 2 *Pet.* ii. 20. These usually either fall away to carnal security, or, being puffed up with pride, turn enthusiasts. (4.) *The wild, blazing enthusiast;* whose conversion all arises *from imaginary notions*. He has an imaginary sight of his sin; his heart; the wrath of God; of hell and the devil, and is terribly distressed: and then he sees Christ in a bodily shape, it may be on the cross with his blood running, or seated on a throne of glory at his father's right hand; he sees a great light shining all around him: hears the angels sing: sees visions, hears voices; has revelations, and thinks himself one of the very best saints in the whole world, though, in truth, he, by scandalous practices, or heretical principles, or both, soon appears to be seven times more a child of the devil than he was before. How-

ture phrase, *that which is born of the flesh is flesh;* and, by conversion, we are to become *spirit: that which is born of the spirit is spirit.* But the *flesh* and the *spirit* are, in Scripture, represented as being *contrary the one to the other.* Will *flesh,* then, of its own accord, become *spirit?* No, surely: for the *flesh lusteth against the spirit;* i. e. is wholly averse from it, and set against it: so that there is no other way but for the *flesh to be crucified,* with the affections and lusts: but the *flesh perfectly hates* this death, and therefore will *resist with all its might.* Rom. viii. 7, 8. John iii. 6. Gal. v. 17. Rom. vi. 6.

As the truth of this point is thus evident, from the reason and nature of things, so it is further confirmed from constant experience: for, let any man read the *Bible* with attention, and he may plainly see that the very thing which God has always been aiming at, in all the external means he has used with his professing people, in every age of the world, has been *to recover them to a conformity to his holy law in heart and life;* i. e. to recover them from a disposition to love themselves supremely, live to themselves ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly, and a practice agreeable thereunto, to a disposition to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively, and to love their neighbours as themselves, and to practise accordingly: *for on these two commands hang all the law and the prophets.* And we may also plainly see, that God's professing people have always manifested the greatest aversion to hearken to the *law* and to the *prophets,* and so to die to themselves, the world, and sin: and thus to give up themselves to God, to love him, live to him, delight in him, and walk in all his ways. God sent all his servants, the *prophets,* to the children of Israel, rising early and sending: but they always hated their words, and so stopped their ears, and refused to obey: yea, they fell into a rage at them, and, in their rage, they mocked them; they scourged them; they bound them; they imprisoned them; they stoned them; they sawed them asunder, and made the rest wander about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth, in sheep-skins and goat-skins, destitute, afflicted, tormented. Heb. xi. 35—38. And when God

sent his well-beloved Son to call a wicked world to return home unto him, they said, *Come, let us kill him,* Mat. xxi. 33—39. And when *Christ* sent his *apostles* to carry the glad tidings of pardon and peace to the ends of the earth, and call all men to repent and be converted; to return, and love, and serve the living God, both *Jews* and *Gentiles* conspired together against them, and killed them; just as the *ten tribes* killed the messenger whom Rehoboam sent unto them, to call and invite them to return to their former allegiance. 1 *Kings* xii. 18. Therefore, says our blessed Saviour to the Jews, who pretended great love to God and to the law, and mightily to honour their prophets, "You are like whited sepulchres; you appear outwardly righteous, but inwardly are full of all hypocrisy and wickedness. Your fathers killed the prophets, whom you pretend to honour, but you are full as bad as they were. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, &c. Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye WOULD NOT!" *Mat.* xxiii. 27—37. From all which, nothing can be plainer, than that this rebellious, God-hating world always have been set against a return to God, and been disposed to do all they could, to render all means ineffectual. Well might St. Stephen, therefore, say unto the Jews as he did, in Acts vii. 51. "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye;" nor had they any reason to be angry with him therefor. And as all who have enjoyed the external means of grace have thus been disposed to hate the light, shut their eyes, stop their ears, and refuse to hear, and been utterly opposed to a return to God; so this is evidently the case with all whom God has inwardly wrought upon by his spirit; as all know, who have either had any experience themselves, or have candidly observed the experience of others. And, indeed, it must be so; for the very same tem-

per which will make men resist the *outward*, will also dispose them to resist the *inward* means of grace. For the *Holy Spirit* teaches and urges the very same things that *Moses* and the *prophets*, and *Christ* and his *apostles*, teach and urge, and pursues the same end; and will, therefore, of consequence, meet with the same opposition and resistance, from the very same quarter. "This is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. He that doth evil hateth the light." *John* iii. 19, 20. That light which will discover men's evil deeds, and show them their fallen, sinful, guilty, helpless, undone condition, and so spoil all their worldly, carnal comforts, the very idols of their hearts, and also kill their legal, self-righteous hopes, which is all the awakened and concerned sinner has, to his own sense and apprehension to depend upon; that light which affects things which are so directly cross to the inward temper of the sinner's heart, he will naturally be disposed to hate, shut his eyes against, flee from, and resist with all his might; and that whether it comes from the *external* teachings of the word, or *internal* teachings of the spirit; yea, so long as there is the least remainder of corruption left in believers themselves, it will hate to die, and struggle with all its might to keep its ground; yea, and to recover its former dominion: *Rom.* vii. 23. "I see another law in my members, warring against the law in my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members." Yea, it implies a contradiction to suppose corruption can in any case be willing to die; for every temper in our hearts *naturally* loves to be gratified and pleased, and it is a contradiction to suppose it can, at the same time, be willing to be crossed and killed. *Gal.* v. 17.

OBJ. *But do not awakened sinners earnestly desire to repent of and be humble for their sins, and to mortify their corruptions, and to give up themselves to God, to love and live to him? And do they not earnestly pray for the divine spirit to assist them so to do? How can they then be disposed at the same time, to make such mighty resistance.*

ANS. (1.) Awakened sinners see themselves in great danger, and they therefore earnestly desire and seek after self-preser-

vation; and this is plainly owing to nature, and not to any grace or goodness in their hearts. *Psalm* lxvi. 3. *Through the greatness of thy power, thine enemies submit themselves unto thee;* i. e. they feign a submission, but they are thine enemies. (2.) That which moves them to desire to repent, be humbled, &c. is, they hope by these means to make amends for their past sins, and ingratiate themselves into the favour of God. *Rom.* x. 3.; i. e. merely from self-love, with pure hypocrisy, they would impose upon God. For, (3.) after all their pretences, desires, and prayers, their nature and temper is just what it used to be; and were they but delivered from the fears of hell, and left at full liberty to follow their own inclinations, they would live as viciously as ever they did. (4.) Yet they pretend to love God, and would fain have him believe them sincere, and are ready to expect acceptance for what they do, and to think it hard if God should not accept them. Now, if it was the work of the spirit of God, to build up such a sinner in this hypocritical, self-righteous way, he might be disposed, while under his fears and terrors, to concur and fall in with the spirit's influence; and all merely from self-love and for self-ends. But if the spirit of God goes about to bring home the law in its strictness, and show such a sinner the very truth, that he does not love God, nor desire to; that his desires, and prayers, and tears, are all hypocritical; that he is still dead in sin, and an enemy to God; that he deserves to be damned as much as ever he did, that God is at liberty, all his duties notwithstanding, to reject him; that he lies absolutely at God's mercy; now he will hate the light, shut his eyes against it, quarrel at it, and resist it with all his might. It is exceedingly hard for the poor sinner when he begins to be awakened, to part with a vain life, and vain companions, his carnal ease and comfort, and all vicious courses, to make restitution to those he has wronged in name or estate, and give himself to reading, meditation, and prayer, and to a serious, mortifying way of living: he cannot bear the thought; would fain contrive an easier way, or else delay, for the present, so mournful and tedious a work. But when, by the dreadful fears of hell and eternal damnation, he has been brought, after much reluctance and unwillingness,

[illegible] hoping thereby to appease the [illegible] the divine favour; now, to have all [illegible] and confounded, by a sight of [illegible] he has no love to God, no [illegible] to be holy, but averse to God and [illegible] all his forced goodness has no virtue [illegible] the whole guilt of all his sin; un- [illegible] and the wrath of God; dead [illegible] God, absolutely at God's mercy; this, [illegible] and far more cross to the very [illegible] than all he ever met with before. [illegible] will be the greatest struggle, and [illegible] before ever the sinner can, by the spirit of God, [illegible] to see and give into these things; [illegible] cross to the sinner's disposition [illegible] and live to hiself ultimately; di- [illegible] and independence. [illegible] God should be so great and so [illegible] so little, so absolutely at his [illegible] When the commandment came, [illegible] So that it is plain, that notwithstand- [illegible] sinner's [illegible] desires and prayers, yet, [illegible] he stands disposed to re- [illegible] with all his might. He [illegible] of his sins, that he is ut- [illegible] his sinfulness: so far from [illegible] he is by no means willing to see [illegible] he has to be humble; so far from desir- [illegible] that he will not so much as [illegible] dead: so far from desiring the gra- [illegible] Spirit to reconcile him to God, [illegible] he is an enemy to God; but would [illegible] desires to love God, and stands [illegible] that light, which would discover the [illegible] *He that doth evil, hateth the light,* and [illegible] *his evil deeds be discovered;* and, for the [illegible] he that hath an evil heart, hates the light and [illegible] the badness of his heart be discovered.

7. From all that has been said, we may learn that those *in-*

fluences of the spirit, which will be sufficient *effectually* to awaken, convince, and humble the sinner, and recover him to God, must be *irresistible* and *supernatural*. That the internal influences of the Holy Spirit are necessary to recover sinners to God, is so plainly held forth every where in the Bible, that the *Arminians* themselves do not deny it: but *how much* and *what kind* of influences are needful, is very much disputed. Now *so much* and *such sort* of influences are, beyond dispute, *needful*, as will be *sufficient effectually to answer the end*, and without which no sinner will ever be converted. This is self-evident. If sinners were so good-natured as to see, and feel, and own their sinfulness, and the justice of the sentence whereby they stand condemned, and die to themselves, the world and sin, and return home to God, through Jesus Christ; to love him, live to him, and delight in him for ever of their own accord, merely upon reading the Bible, and hearing the law and the gospel preached, then there would be no need of any inward influences of the spirit at all; or, if they were so good-natured as to be easily persuaded to do so, then some small degree of the inward influences of the spirit would do. But if, in the *first place*, they are altogether unwilling to see, and feel, and own their sin and guilt, and the justice of their condemnation according to law, and entirely disposed to hate and resist the light, as hath but just now been proved, then they must be brought to it by an *all-conquering irresistible* grace, or not all. And if, in the *second place*, the clearest sight and greatest sense a natural man can have *of what God is*, instead of making him appear infinitely glorious and amiable in the eyes of one whose heart is dead in sin, and diametrically opposite to the divine nature, will rather irritate corruption, and make the native enmity of the heart ferment and rage, and become but the more apparent and sensible, as has been heretofore proved, then there must be a *supernatural, spiritual*, and *divine* change wrought in the heart, by the *immediate* influences of the spirit of God, whereby it shall become *natural* to look upon God as infinitely glorious and amiable in being what he is, and so a foundation hereby laid for us to love him with all our hearts, and so sincerely to repent, return, and give up ourselves to him, to live to him, and delight

in him for ever: I say, if these things be so, there must be such a change wrought by the spirit of God, or not one sinner in the world will ever be converted to God; and, therefore, that there is an absolute necessity of such influences of the spirit of God, in order to a saving conversion, is evident, to a demonstration, from the very reason and nature of things. God himself must *take away the heart of stone, and give an heart of flesh,* and *write his law on our hearts; raise us from the dead; create us anew; open our eyes,* &c. &c. according to the language of scripture. And these things God does do for all that are renewed, and therefore they are said *to be born of God; to be born of the spirit; to be spiritual; to be made partakers of the divine nature,* &c. and God is said to give *faith, repentance,* and every divine grace. *Ezek.* xxxvi. 26. *Heb.* viii. 10. *Eph.* ii. 1—10. 1 *Cor.* iv. 6. *John.* i. 13. and iii. 6. *Rom.* viii. 6. 9. 2 *Pet.* i. 4. *Acts* v. 31. *James* i. 17.

8. From what has been said, we may learn *to understand the doctrine of divine sovereignty in the bestowment of special grace for the regeneration and conversion of sinners.* The scripture represents God as *choosing some before the foundation of the world, to be holy and to be his children,* Eph. i. 4, 5.; and teaches us that *whom he did predestinate, them he also calls, and whom he calls, them he also justifies, and whom he justifies, them he also glorifies,* Rom. viii. 30; and plainly intimates that *such as are given to Christ, and ordained to eternal life, believe, and none other.* John vi. 37. 39. Acts xiii. 48. Rom. xi. 7. And the scriptures teach us that *God has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and compassion on whom he will have compassion,* Rom. ix. 18.; and that, *for the most part, he passes by the rich, and great, and honourable, and chooses the meanest and most ignoble, that no flesh might glory in his presence.* 1 Cor. i. 26—29. *He hides the gospel from the wise and prudent, and reveals it to babes; and that because it pleases him so to do, and Christ rejoices in his sovereign pleasure herein,* as displaying his infinite wisdom. *Mat.* xi. 25, 26.

And now what has been said may show us the infinite reasonableness of such a procedure: for God, whose eyes run to and fro through all the earth, seeing all things as being what

they are, plainly beholds and views the state and temper of this apostate world; and let men pretend what they will, he knows their hearts; he knows they do not love him, nor care for him: he sees all their hypocrisy, and their inward contrariety to him and his law, and how much they are settled in their temper; so far from repentance, that they will not so much as see their sin, but stand to justify themselves, insensible of their guilt, and insensible of their desert, hating the light. He sees they hate to perceive their sin, and guilt, and desert, and to be humbled, and lie down at his foot, and be absolutely beholden to him; and that they would make the utmost resistance if he should take them in hand, and go about thoroughly to convince them, by his spirit, how things really are. Thus he views his apostate, rebellious creatures, and sees how sinful, how dead in sin, how contrary to all good, and how irreclaimable they are, and, upon the whole, how much they deserve eternal damnation. In the days of eternity, he saw just how things would be beforehand; and now, in time, he sees just how things actually are. In the days of eternity, therefore, he saw that there would not be any thing in them to move him to have mercy on any; and now, in time, he finds it to be the case: and yet he was pleased, *then*, of his mere sovereign pleasure, to determine not to cast off all, but to save some: so, *now*, he is pleased to put his sovereign pleasure in execution; and he has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and compassion on whom he will have compassion, and many times takes the meanest and vilest, that the sovereignty of his grace might be the more illustrious, and the pride of all flesh might be brought low, and the Lord alone be exalted. And surely such a conduct infinitely well becomes the supreme Governor of the whole world.

Indeed, if any of Adam's race were so well disposed, as, of their own accord, merely upon reading the Bible, hearing the gospel preached, and enjoying the common means of grace, to believe and repent, and to return home to God through Jesus Christ, they might be accepted, pardoned, and saved: nor would there be any room for, or need of sovereign grace. But God, who knows the hearts of all, sees that all the pretences of sinners that way are but mere hypocrisy, and that at heart

they are his enemies, and utterly opposed to a return. Or if there was any virtue to be found among any of the fallen race of Adam, antecedent to God's grace, this might move him to have mercy upon one, rather than another. But he sees that all are entirely destitute of love to him, and entirely at enmity against him, wholly void of real goodness, and dead in sin, and that the only reason why some are not so outwardly extravagant and vicious as others, is, because he has, by one means and another, restrained them, and not because they are really better. And while God thus beholds all alike dead in sin, and, in the temper of their hearts, by nature equally averse to a return to him, and views all as guilty and hell-deserving, there is nothing, there can be nothing, to move him to determine to show mercy to one, rather than another, but his own good pleasure; and therefore he has mercy on whom he will have mercy: he awakens, convinces, humbles, converts whom he pleases, and leaves the rest to follow their own inclinations, and take their own course, *enduring, with much long-suffering, the vessels of wrath.*

Let it be here noted, that many of those warm disputes about the doctrine of divine sovereignty, which have filled the christian world, turn very much upon *this point.* All are agreed, that whosoever believes, repents, and returns to God, through Jesus Christ, shall be saved. All will, therefore, yield that if mankind in general, were so well disposed as to return to God, through Jesus Christ, of their own accord, upon the calls and invitations of the gospel, and only by the influence and help of those advantages which are common, then all might be saved; nor would there be any need of, or room for, this sovereign, distinguishing grace. But if mankind have none of this disposition, but are every way diametrically opposite thereto; if all the calls of the gospel, and common means and methods of grace will have no effectual influence upon them; if nothing but an almighty, all-conquering grace can stop them in their course of rebellion, subdue their lusts, and recover them to God; if this be the case of all mankind, then it is plain that nothing but the mere mercy of God can interpose and prevent an universal ruin. And it is plain, that the sovereign Governor of the whole world is, in the nature of things, at most perfect

liberty to show this mercy to none, or to some few, or to all, just as it seems good in his sight: and since, from eternity, he foresaw just how things would be, from eternity he might determine what to do. So that the great question is, Whether mankind are naturally so entirely averse to a true conversion? For if they are, the reasonableness of the divine sovereignty must be admitted in this case; and if they are not, none will any longer plead for it: and what the natural opposition of mankind to conversion is, may be easily seen, if we consider what the true nature of conversion is, and compare their temper herewith. And what the true nature of conversion is, may be easily known by considering the true nature of the moral law. In a word, if the law does only require what the *Arminians* and *Pelagians* suppose, and religion be just such a thing, it is a plain case that mankind are not so bad, nor do they need such an irresistible grace. But if the law requires quite another sort of holiness, and so true religion be quite another sort of thing, even such as I have described, which lies so diametrically opposite to the natural bent and bias of our whole souls, it is a clear case that grace must be irresistible, and can proceed from nothing but mere free mercy, nor result from any thing but the sovereign pleasure of the most High. So that, in short, the whole dispute is resolved into this question: What does the law of God require, and wherein does a genuine conformity thereto consist? But of this more afterwards.

And from what has been said, we may easily gather a plain and short answer to all the mighty cry about *promises, promises to the unconverted, if they will do as well as they can*; for it is plain, heaven's gates stand wide open to all that believe and repent, and return to God, through Jesus Christ. *John* iii. 16. And it is plain, the wrath of God is revealed against all who do not do this. *John* iii. 36. And it is plain that there is nothing but the want of a good temper, together with the obstinate perverseness of sinners, that hinders their return to God; and that, therefore, all their pretences of being willing to do as well as they can, are mere hypocrisy. They are so unwilling to return to God, or take one step that way, that they can be brought back by nothing short of an almighty

powers; and are so far, therefore, from being entitled to the promises of the gospel, that they are actually, and that deservedly too, under condemnation by the gospel, (*John* iii. 18.) and under all the curses of the law. *Gal.* iii. 10. "Take heed, therefore, O sinner, thou enemy of God, when you pretend that you desire to repent and do as well as you can, that you be not found quieting yourself in a state of estrangement from God, hiding your natural aversion to God and holiness under fair pretences. And know it, if you do, though you may deceive yourself by the means, yet it will appear, another day, before all worlds, and it will be known that you were an enemy to God, and *would not* be reconciled, and did but flatter him with your lips, and lie unto him with your tongue, in all your seemingly devout pretences. You think yourself good enough to have an interest in the promises, but infinite goodness judges you deserve to be numbered among the children of wrath and heirs of hell. *John* iii. 18. 36. Your high conceit of your own goodness is the foundation of all your confidence, and both join to keep you secure in sin and under guilt, and insensible of your need of Christ and sovereign grace." *Luke* v. 31. *Rom.* x. 3. Did sinners but see the badness of their hearts, they would be soon convinced that the promises are not theirs, but the threatenings; and would feel and know that they have no claims to make, but lie absolutely at mercy. *Luke* xviii. 13.

9. And if it is nothing but the mere grace and sovereign good pleasure of God, which moves him to stop sinners in their career to hell, and by his irresistible and all-conquering grace, and by the supernatural influences of his Holy Spirit, subdue their stubbornness, take down the power of sin in their hearts, and recover them to himself: and if he does this for them, when they are at enmity against him, and are his open enemies by wicked works, and so are altogether deserving his wrath and vengeance; I say, if this be the case, there is all reason to think *that he who thus begins, will carry on the work to perfection.* He knew how bad the sinner was when he first took him in hand; how he hated to be converted, and how he would resist, and that his own almighty arm must bring salvation; and yet this did not discourage his first un-

dertaking. And he knew how the sinner would prove after conversion; just how barren and unfruitful; just how perverse and rebellious, and just how apt to forget God and turn away from him, and that his own almighty grace must always be working in him to will and to do. *Phil.* ii. 13. He knew all the discouraging circumstances beforehand, and his infinite goodness surmounted them all; and he had mercy on the poor sinner, because he would have mercy on him, of his mere good pleasure, from his boundless grace, aiming at the glory of his own great name. *Eph.* i. 6. And now, this being the case, we have all reason to think that God will never alter his hand, or leave unfinished the work which he has begun; for there always will be the same motive from which he undertook the work, to excite him to carry it on; even the infinite goodness of his nature; and he will be always under the same advantages to answer the end he at first proposed, namely, the advancement of the glory of his grace. And he will never meet with any unforeseen difficulties or discouragements in his way. We may, therefore, be pretty certain, if really God begins this work under such views and such circumstances, that it is with design to carry it on, as *Samuel* reasons in a parallel case, 1 *Sam.* xii. 22. *For the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake; because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people.* So that if the doctrine of the *saints' perseverance* were not expressly taught in scripture, yet on this ground we might argue very strongly for it. But that this is a doctrine plainly revealed in the gospel, we may learn from *Mat.* xiii. 23. *John* iv. 14. x. 4, 5. 27, 28. 1 *John* iii. 6. 9. *Heb.* viii. 10, &c. When St. Paul kept under his body, and brought it into subjection, LEST *he should be a cast-away,* (1 *Cor.* ix. 27.) he did no otherwise than he was wont to do in temporal concerns, in cases wherein he was, beforehand, *certain of the event.* So he sent word to the *chief Captain* of the *Jews,* lying in wait to kill him, *lest he should be murdered by them;* although it was revealed to him from God, but the very night before, that he should live to see Rome. *Acts* xxiii. 12—21. So he would not allow the *sailors* to leave the ship in the midst of the storm, *lest they should some of them be drowned* for want of their help; although, but a little before,

it was revealed to him from God, that not one of them should be drowned. *Acts* xxvii. 23—31. And, indeed, it was his duty to do as he did, as much as if he had been at the greatest uncertainties about the event. So, although Paul knew that *never any thing should separate him from the love of God,* (Rom. viii. 38.) yet he used all possible endeavours to mortify his corruptions, *lest he should be a cast-away*. And indeed, it was his duty to do so, as much as if he had been at the greatest uncertainties about the event. And what was his duty, was also the duty of all good men; and therefore St. Paul, in his *epistles*, is frequently exhorting all to do as he did; and that in a perfect consistency with the doctrine of the *saints' perseverance*, which he also teaches. And as Paul's being *certain of the event* did not tend to make him careless in the use of proper means to save his natural life, but rather tended to encourage and animate him, as knowing that he should finally succeed; so his being *certain of the event* did not tend to make him careless, but to animate him, with respect to his spiritual and eternal life. And as it was with him, so it is with all good men. *Rom.* vi. 2. For this is always the case, that certainty of success animates men, if the thing they are about be what they love, and what their hearts are engaged in; but to die to themselves, the world, and sin, and love God, and live to him, and grow up into perfect holiness, is what all believers love, and have their hearts engaged after; an absolute certainty, therefore, of perseverance has, in the nature of things, the greatest tendency to animate them to the most sprightly activity. There are none but graceless hypocrites that take encouragement from the doctrines of free grace to carelessness and sin. *Rom.* vi. 1, 2.

10. If this be the nature of a saving conversion; if this be the nature of true holiness; if this be true religion, so *contrary* to flesh and blood, and all the habitual propensities of nature, *then, so long as there is the least corruption left in the heart, there will, of necessity, be a continual conflict:* grace will continually seek the ruin of sin, through its contrariety to it, and hatred of it; and sin will strive to maintain its ground; yea, and to regain its former dominion. The gracious nature delights in the law of God, and aspires after sin-

less perfection: the sinful nature hates the law of God, and strives to lead the man captive into sin. The gracious nature is a disposition to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively; and this sinful nature is a disposition to love self supremely, live to self ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly: and because these two *are contrary the one to the other*, therefore *the flesh will lust against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.* Gal. v. 17. The gracious nature joins in on God's side against all sin; and while God *works in the man to will and to do, he works out his own salvation with fear and trembling;* with caution and circumspection; with watchfulness and holy concern; labouring to die to himself, the world, and sin, and be wholly the Lord's. *Phil.* ii. 12, 13. While the divine spirit is breathing upon his heart, and realizing to him the being and perfections of God; the existence and importance of divine and eternal things, and is spreading divine light over his soul, and is banishing selfish and worldly views, and is drawing his soul to holy and divine contemplations, he feels the divine influence; he blesses the Lord; he summons all within him to engagedness; he pants after God. "O that I might know him, that I might see him in his infinite glory! (*Psalm* lxiii. 1, 2.) 'O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee; my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see thy power and glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.' (*Verse* 8.) 'My soul followeth hard after thee.' (*Psalm* lxxiii. 25.) 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth I desire besides thee.' O that I could, with my whole heart, love thee for ever, live to thee for ever, live upon thee for ever, and never, never depart from thee! O that I could think for thee, and speak for thee, and act for thee; at home and abroad, by day and by night, always live to thee, and upon thee! Here, Lord, I give myself to thee, to be for ever thine; to love thee and to fear thee, and to walk in all thy ways, and to keep all thy commands; and O that my heart might never depart from thee! But, alas! alas! *to will is present with me:* to have a disposition to all this, and long for all this, and seek and strive for all this, is easy and natural, *for I delight in the law of God after*

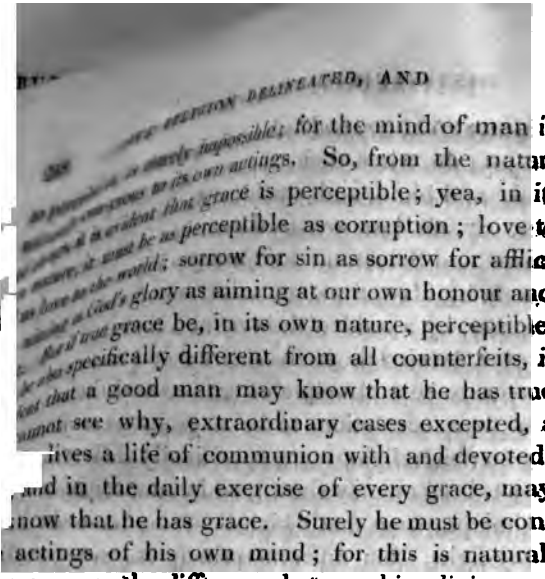
the inward man; but how to perform I find not; how to get my whole heart so to fall in, as that there shall not be the least contrary temper, this is quite beyond me, *for I am still carnal, sold under sin, have another law in my members,* have still the remains (*of the flesh*) of my native contrariety to God, and disposition to disrelish divine things; and so am apt to forget God, to warp off from him, and to have selfish and worldly views and designs secretly creep into my mind, and steal away my heart from God; and so am daily *led into captivity.* O that sin was entirely dead! that a disposition to disrelish God, to forget him, to go away from him, to live without him, and to seek content in that which is not God, was entirely slain! *O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me!*" Rom. vii. 14—24.

If grace and corruption were not so contrary the one to the other; so diametrically opposite, there might possibly be an accommodation between them, and both quietly dwell together in the same heart; but now they are set for each other's ruin, and seek each other's destruction: and, like fire and water, will never rest till one or the other be entirely destroyed. *Gal.* v. 17.

If grace could be wholly killed, or corruption wholly slain, then the conflict of believers might wholly cease in this life; but grace is immortal, like a *living spring* that shall never dry; (*John* iv. 14.) like a *root* that will ever grow; (*Mat.* xiii. 20. 23.) and Christ is always *purging* believers, that they may *bring forth more fruit.* (*John* xv. 2.) So that *he that is born of God cannot sin as others do;* (1 *John* iii. 9.) cannot sin, but against the grain of his heart, the gracious nature continually resisting; (*Gal.* v. 17.) so that it is certain, from the nature of things, that David and Solomon neither of them felt, in their worst frames, as graceless men do. Grace resisted within, (*Gal.* v. 17.) hating their proceedings; nor did it cease inwardly to struggle and torment them, till the one cries out, *My bones wax old through my roaring all the day long.* Psalm lii. 3. For *his sin was ever before his eyes.* Ps. xxxi. 3. And the other, *Vanity of vanities, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.* Eccles. i. 2.

Many *stony-ground hearers*, who were once filled with light and joy, do, when their religion is all worn out, and they lie dead, and blind, and stupid, whole months and years together, cry, *the best are dead sometimes*; and have recourse to David and Solomon: and many a hypocrite, whose religion is only by fits and pangs, sometimes floated as the streets in summer, by a sudden shower, and then, in a few days, as dry as ever, deceive themselves here; and many take natural conscience to be a principle of grace, and the war between that and their corruptions to be a gracious conflict. But as all counterfeit religions are specifically different from the true, as has been already shown, so by consequence, their conflict is different from that which believers have, in its very nature. They fight, from different principles, and for different ends, and about different things, and in a different manner, just as their religions differ from one another.

11. If this be the nature of conversion and holiness, and the manner wherein they are wrought; and if true religion be thus specifically different from all counterfeits, *then may believers be infallibly certain that they have true grace.* A man cannot but perceive his own thoughts, and know what views he has, and be intuitively acquainted with his own designs and aims; so every man knows it is with him, as to the things of this world. Much less is it possible that there should be *so great a change* in a man's heart and life, thoughts, affections, and actions, as there is made by conversion, and yet he know nothing about it. For a man to be awakened, out of a state of security in sin, to see what a sinful, guilty, helpless, lost, undone state he is in, and yet not to perceive any thing of it, evidently implies a contradiction, and so is, in the nature of things, impossible. For a man to be brought to see God in his infinite glory, so as to be disposed to love him supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively, and yet not to perceive it, i. e. not to be conscious of his views and affections, also implies a contradiction, and so is impossible. For a man to lose his selfish and worldly views more and more, from year to year, and die to himself, the world, and sin; and for a man to live a life of communion with God, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord, and yet not at all



[illegible] impossible; for the mind of man is [illegible] to its own actings. So, from the nature [illegible] that grace is perceptible; yea, in its [illegible] be as perceptible as corruption; love to [illegible] world; sorrow for sin as sorrow for afflic- [illegible] God's glory as aiming at our own honour and [illegible] grace be, in its own nature, perceptible, [illegible] specifically different from all counterfeits, it [illegible] that a good man may know that he has true [illegible] see why, extraordinary cases excepted, a [illegible] lives a life of communion with and devoted- [illegible] in the daily exercise of every grace, may [illegible] know that he has grace. Surely he must be con- [illegible] actings of his own mind; for this is natural. [illegible] may see the difference between his religion and [illegible] when the difference is so great and plain: so [illegible] scriptures did not expressly teach us that assur- [illegible] attainable, it is yet evidently demonstrable from the [illegible] of things.

[illegible] he Scriptures do plainly teach this doctrine, in 2 *Pet.* [illegible] *John* v. 13. 1 *John* ii. 3. and iii. 14, &c. &c. Be- [illegible] all those promises, that are made for the comfort and [illegible] of God's people in this world, suppose that they may [illegible] that they are the people of God: for, unless a man knows that he is a child of God, he cannot rationally take comfort in those promises which are peculiar to such. It is true, brazen hypocrites will do so, but they act very presumptuously. It is folly and madness for me to flatter myself that God has promised to do so and so for me, unless I know that I am one to whom the promises belong: For instance, it is folly and madness for me to *believe* that God will make *all things work together for my good,* according to that promise in *Rom.* viii. 28. unless I know that *I love God;* for this promise plainly respects such, and no other. But there are very many precious promises made to believers in the word of God, which are evidently designed for their comfort and support. It is certain, therefore, that God thinks that believers may *know* they are such; without which knowledge, all these promises cannot attain their end.

Besides, to suppose that to be a servant of God, and a servant of the devil; to be going the way to heaven, and the way to hell; to be travelling in the narrow way, and to be travelling in the broad way, are so near alike, as that even good men themselves cannot possibly know them asunder, and which way they are going, is, on every account, intolerably absurd; nor could the christian world have possibly drunk in such a notion but that true grace is so very rare a thing

I may here, by the way, just observe these three things: 1. *That the way for a man to know that he has grace, is not to try himself by fallible signs, but intuitively to look into himself and see grace.* A thousand signs of grace will not prove that a man has grace. There is no sign of grace to be depended upon, but grace itself; for every thing but grace a hypocrite may have: and what grace, holiness, or true religion is, I have already endeavoured to show. 2. *That the way for a man to know that he has grace, is not to judge himself by the degree and measure of his religious frames and affections, or the height of his attainments, but by the special nature of them:* for as there is not any one grace but a hypocrite may have its counterfeit, so hypocrites may rise as high in *their* religion as any true believer does in *his.* Was Elijah, the prophet, jealous for the name and worship of the true God, and against false religion? So was Jehu: and he appeared as full of zeal, and more courageous, and did greater exploits. There was scarcely a more zealous saint than Elijah, in *Old-Testament* times; but yet Jehu, that hypocrite, made a much greater show and noise; seemed to be fuller of zeal and courage, and actually did greater exploits, setting aside the miracles which God wrought by Elijah. (1 *Kings* xviii. xix. chap. 2 *Kings* ix. x. chap.) And we do not read of one saint in all the *Bible* that fasted in a constant way, twice every week, as the Pharisee did. (*Luke* xviii.) And there is not one saint in all the *Bible* that ever did externally and visibly, any higher acts of self-denial, than to give *all his goods to feed the poor, and his body to be burnt;* and yet St. Paul intimates that a man may do this, and still have no grace in his heart. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 3. It is no certain evidence, therefore, that a man is a good man, because he has a *great*

deal of religion; more than the most, and full as much as the best; yea, more than any in all the country; yea, or in all the whole world; for, in Jehu's time, there was not perhaps, for a while, one like him upon the face of the earth. A man, therefore, cannot know that he is a good man, by the *degree* of his religion, but only from the *special nature* of it. And wherein true religion *specifically* differs from all counterfeits, I have already shown. 3. Since grace is, in its own nature, *perceptible* and *specifically different* from all counterfeits, *there is no need of the immediate witness of the spirit, in order to a full assurance.* If the spirit of God does but give us a good degree of grace, and enlighten our minds to understand the scriptures, and so to know the nature of true grace, we may then perceive that we have grace; and the more grace we have, the more perceptible will it be, and its difference from all counterfeits will be the more plain. And if a believer may know and be certain that he has grace, without the immediate witness of the the spirit, then such a witness is altogether needless, and would be of no advantage: but God never grants his spirit to believers, to do things needless and to no advantage; and therefore there is no such thing as the immediate witness of the spirit in this affair. And besides, it is plain the scriptures *every where* direct us to look into ourselves, to see whether we love God and keep his commands; to see whether Christ, in his holy nature, be formed in us; to see whether the spirit, as an enlightener and sanctifier, dwells in us, and influences and governs us; but never *once* directs us to look for the *immediate* witness of the spirit, in order to know whether we have grace.

Obj. *But the text says expressly,* The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; *Rom.* viii. 16.

Ans. But the text does not in the least intimate that the spirit witnesses *immediately.* The spirit *bears witness;* but how? The spirit *makes it evident* that we are the children of God; but in what way? *by immediate revelation?* No: the scripture no where tells us to look for such revelations, or lays down any marks whereby we may know which come from God, and which from the devil. How then does the spirit make it

evident that we are the children of God, and by what witness does he make it appear? Not by *telling* us that we are children, the devil may *tell* hypocrites so; but by *making us children in the very temper of our hearts;* by giving to us *much* of a *child-like* frame of spirit towards God; a thing the devil cannot do, and so a thing by which we may certainly know. This holy, divine, child-like frame and temper of heart, whereby we bear the very image of our heavenly father, is God's *mark,* which more or less conspicuously, he sets upon all the *lambs* of his flock. This is the *seal of the spirit.* (Eph. i. 13.) For this is the *earnest of our inheritance,* (verse 14.) It is *eternal life begun* in the soul, (*John* xvii. 3.) This is called the *witness of the spirit,* because it is *what the spirit works* in our hearts, and that by which he *makes it evident* that we are the children of God; the *design* of *witnesses* being to *make* things *evident.* And, indeed, this is the *only distinguishing mark* that God puts upon his children, and the *only thing* wherein they differ from all hypocrites; and is the *only evidence* the scripture directs them to look for and expect, and without which all other evidences are just good for nothing. *Mat.* vii. 24—27. *John* xv. 2. 1 *John* ii. 3, 4. iii. 6—10.

And this being the case, we may see how much out of the way those are, who think and say *that it is a sin for them to doubt the goodness of their state, because of their badness, and because they can see no grace in their hearts.* "For," say they, "that would be to call God's truth and faithfulness into question; who has by his spirit, immediately assured me of his love and my salvation; just as if the immutability of his purpose depended upon my good frames: No; I must do as Abraham did, *who, against hope, believed in hope;* so, though I see no grace in my heart, or signs of any, yet I must believe my state is good, and that I shall be saved. It is not my duty to look so much into my own heart; I shall never be the better for that; but I must look to Christ, and believe, and never doubt; for the spirit of God did, *at such a time,* assure me of Christ's love to me; and I knew I was not deceived; and it would now be a great sin in me to doubt; it would be giving the lie to Christ and to the Holy Spirit."

[illegible] poor sinners under, who dare [illegible] sin, which [illegible] heart and [illegible] condemnation; and [illegible] of our good [illegible] evident! [illegible] their doubts to [illegible] the secret [illegible] so agreeable to the [illegible] that thus leads [illegible] their minds [illegible] believe it! Surely [illegible] *transformed into an angel of* [illegible]

[illegible] Mat. xiv 31. O thou of little [illegible]

[illegible] name Peter for doubting his state, but for [illegible]

[illegible] Mark xvi 14.

[illegible] they were in a good state, but [illegible]

[illegible] against hope he believed in hope, [illegible]

[illegible] was that he should have [illegible] to the purpose.

[illegible] v. 7.

[illegible] by a realizing belief [illegible] 18. It was [illegible] he ever dri- [illegible] a good state, with- [illegible]

[illegible] *But doubts arise from un-* [illegible]

[illegible] for him to do some par- [illegible] conscience. [illegible] to the purpose.

[illegible] from his not [illegible] which he had from the devil, [illegible] but sometimes his [illegible] he is deluded; and [illegible] to doubt. The devil would [illegible] a venture, without a thorough [illegible]

Alas! alas! How does the God of this world blind the minds of them that believe not! Some firmly believe that there is no such thing as a good man's knowing that he has grace; and so they contentedly live along, not knowing what world they are hastening unto; to heaven or to hell; but they *hope* their state is good, and *hope* their *hope* is well grounded, but *know* not but that their *hope* is that of the hypocrite: yea, they are not willing to believe there is any such thing as knowing; for that would make them suspect that they are wrong, and that true religion is something they never had; which if it be the case yet they are not willing to know it. They hide themselves in the dark! They say there is no light! And will not believe that a good man may *know that he has passed from death to life.* While *others,* from the very same principle, viz. *because they hate the light,* firmly believe that it is *a sin to doubt;* and so will never, dare, never call their state into question, and thoroughly look through the matter: both are equally rotten at heart, and so equally hate the light, although they take different methods to keep from it; and the devil does his utmost to keep both fast bound where they are.

3. It is a sin for a true believer to live so as not to have his evidences clear; but it is no sin for him to be so honest and impartial, as to doubt, when in fact, his evidences are not clear. It is a sin to darken his evidences; but it is no sin to see that they are darkened. It is a sin for a man, by rioting and drunkenness, to make himself sick; but it is no sin to feel that he is sick; or, if there be grounds for it, to doubt he shall die. We may bring calamities upon ourselves by our sins, both outward and inward, and our calamaties may arise from our sins; and yet our calamities have not the nature of *sins,* but are rather of the nature of *punishments.* It is sin, in believers, which lays the foundation for doubts: it is sin which is the occasion of their doubts; but their doubts are not sins any the more for this. Some seem to suppose that every thing which is occasioned by sin, is sin; but there is no truth in their supposition. It is not a sin for unconverted people to think themselves to be unconverted; and yet that thought of themselves is occasioned by sin—for their being unconverted is their sin.

Obj. *But believers are exhorted* to hold fast their confidence. *Heb.* iii. 6. *And it is said,* verse 14. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.

Ans. That is, their confidence that *Jesus* is the *Christ,* together with a true faith in him, as is manifest from the whole context. Nor is any thing more absurd than to say, that men shall *be made partakers of Christ,* if they hold fast their *confidence* of *their good state,* which is what many a hypocrite does, and that to the very last. *Matt.* vii. 22. *Luke* xiii. 25, 26, 27.

Happy the true believer, who is made impartial by divine grace! It is a recovery to God and holiness that he is after: a confidence that his sins are pardoned, without *this*, would be but a poor thing. If he obtain *this*, he gets what he wants; and if not, he feels himself undone: nor can he flatter himself that he has obtained it, when he has not: and *this* he makes his only evidence of God's eternal love, and of his title to eternal glory; and believes his state to be good, no further than this goes. *Mat.* vii. 21—27.

Thus I have gone through the *first use*, the use of *instruction*: and thus we see how a right understanding of the *law* will set many of the important doctrines of religion in a clear and easy, in a scriptural and rational light. By the *law* we may learn the primitive state of man, and how low we are fallen, and to what we must be recovered; and so, by consequence, how averse we are to a recovery: what grace we need to recover us; and so, by consequence, that we must be saved by sovereign grace, or not at all: whence the reasonableness of the saints' perseverance appears; and, from the whole, the nature of the christian conflict and the attainableness of assurance are discovered. And I will conclude this *use* with two *remarks*:

Remark 1. If the law requires what, I think, I have proved it does, and a conformity to it consists in what I have before described, then all the other particulars do necessarily and most inevitably follow. Such was the image of God in which Adam was created, and such is our natural depravity, and such are the best duties of the unregenerate, and such is the nature of conversion, and our aversion to it, &c. so that, if my first principles are true, then the whole scheme is, beyond dispute, true also. And what are my first principles? Why, that to love God with all our hearts, and our neighbours as ourselves, is originally the very essence of religion; and that the grounds upon which God requires us so to do, are to be the motives of our obedience. He requires us to love him supremely, &c. because he is supremely, glorious and amiable, and because our additional obligations to him are what they are. He requires us to love our neighbours as ourselves, because they are what they are, and stand in such relations to

us. With a perfect moral rectitude of temper, influenced and governed by truth; by the reason and fitness of things, he would have us love and glorify him as GOD, i. e. as being what he is; and love and treat our neighbours as being what they are. And is not this *evidently* the meaning of the divine law?

REMARK 2. If the law, as a rule of life, be so abated and altered, as that now it *only* requires us, merely from a principle of self-love and for self-ends, sincerely to endeavour to love God and keep his commands, and aim at his glory; and if the law, as a covenant, be disannulled, and such an obedience be substituted in the room of perfection, as a condition of eternal life, or as a condition of our interest in Christ, then the contrary to all that I have laid down is most true and certain. For let the primitive state of man be what it would, it is plain we are not entirely destitute of a conformity to this *new law*, much less diametrically opposite to it in the natural temper of our minds: nor are our best duties, while unregenerate, sin; it is plain, conversion is another and a much easier thing, and that we are not so entirely averse to it, and do not need irresistible grace, nor lie at God's sovereign mercy, &c. All these things, and many more such-like, are plain, if the *good old law* is thus altered and abated, and thus disannulled; if the *new law* requires no more, and this be the condition of eternal life, or of an interest in Christ. So that, if any are disposed to disbelieve what have been laid down as consequences, and to build upon another fabric; if they will be consistent with themselves, they can lay no other foundation than this, viz. *To destroy the law;* which I have before proved to be as impossible as to destroy the nature of God; because the moral law necessarily results from the divine perfections, and our obligations to conform to it are infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, as the nature and perfections of God himself.

And, therefore, I think, we may conclude, with the greatest certainty, that this foundation, viz. that the law is thus abated and altered, is but sand; and that the fabric built upon it will not stand. If the law had required us to love ourselves supremely, and live to ourselves ultimately, and to

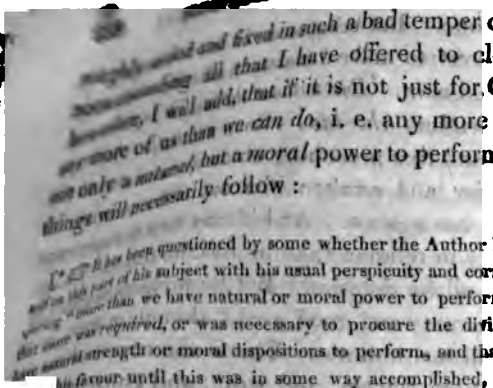
have endeavoured to love God and our neighbours only to answer our own ends; then this sort of religion would have been right.—Did I say *right*? No; it would not be right, being unalterably contrary to the very reason and nature of things; nor could such a law have been possibly made by a God, who loves righteousness, and hates iniquity. But if this was *right*; if this was religion, it is plain mankind have *the root of the matter* in them; for they are all naturally inclined to love themselves supremely, and live to themselves ultimately; and so would not need *to be born again*, to have *a new nature*, the *old nature* would be sufficient; they would only need to be convinced that it is for their interest to endeavour to love God and do their duty, and merely self-love would make them religious, in order to answer their own ends. But if the law never has been thus abated and altered, then this religion is really no religion at all; nothing but mere hypocrisy, and of a nature diametrically opposite to true holiness. Only let it be clearly determined *what the nature of the moral law is*, and there will be a final end put to a hundred controversies.

Here is a man, he reforms his life a little, and joins with the church; he prays in his family, and sometimes in his closet: and, for the most part, it may be, he is honest in his dealings, and civil and sober in his behaviour; and this is his conversion; this is his religion. And now he pleads that conversion is a gradual thing, because his was such; and that a man cannot know when he was converted, because that is the case with him; that there is no need of irresistible grace, because he knows that it is a pretty easy thing to convert as he has done; and he hates the doctrine of divine sovereignty, because he never felt any need of a sovereign grace to save him; and he holds falling from grace, because his religion is as easily lost as gotten. But does he know that he has any grace, after all? No, no, that is a thing, (says he,) none can know. He believes the Holy Spirit assists him; but he is not sensible of his influences, or of any help from him, any more than if he had none. He believes he loves God, and is a true saint at heart; but he does not feel any more love to God, or grace in his heart, than if there was none there; and the reason is, be-

cause there is none. But being secure in sin, and it being for his worldly interest to make a profession of religion, he now sets up for a good man. *For without the law sin is dead*, and so he is *alive without the law*. Rom. vii. 8, 9. And now those doctrines and that preaching which are calculated to detect his hypocrisy, and awaken him out of his security, he hates and cries out against. And if any seem to experience any thing further in religion than he has, for that very reason he condemns it all for delusion. But he pretends mightily to plead up for morality and good works, though in truth, he is an enemy to all real holiness. This is the course of many; but some are more sincere, and strict, and conscientious in their way.

But let men be ever so sincere, strict, and conscientious in their religion, if all results merely from self-love, the slavish fears of hell, and mercenary hopes of heaven, there is not, in all their religion, the least real, genuine conformity to the moral law; it is all but an hypocritical, feigned show of love and obedience; it is not the thing which the law requires, but something of a quite different nature; unless we lay aside God's old and everlasting law, and invent a new, abated altered law, which shall declare that to be right, which, in the nature of things, is unalterably wrong; and by such a law, such a religion will pass for genuine. But it is sad, when we are driven to invent a *new law*, to vindicate our religion and our hopes of heaven, since, at the day of judgment, we shall find the *old law* to be in full force.

I am sensible that *old objection* will be always rising: "But it is not just that God should require of us more than we can do, and then threaten to damn us for not doing of it." Just as if God may not require us to love him with all our hearts, merely because we are not suited with him; and just as if we were not to blame for being of such a bad temper and disposition, merely because we are thoroughly settled in it, and have no heart to be otherwise; just as if the worse any one is, the less he is to blame; than which nothing can be more absurd. Truly, I cannot but think, that, by this, we are so far from being excused, that, even merely for this we deserve eternal damnation. For what can be much worse than to be so tho-



[* It has been questioned by some whether the Author has expressed himself on this part of his subject with his usual perspicuity and correctness. If by requiring "more than we have natural or moral power to perform," he meant only that more was required, or was necessary to procure the divine favour, than we have natural strength or moral dispositions to perform, and that God might justly withhold his favour until this was in some way accomplished, his reasoning may be correct. But if he meant, as his words seem to import, that God might require of us, as a condition of his favour, what we have neither natural nor moral power to perform, and, by requiring this, lay us under an obligation to perform impossibilities, then his reasoning is evidently unsound and inconclusive. For how can God's law be founded in the reason and nature of things, and his demands in every instance be proportioned, not indeed to the moral, but to the natural power and capacity of his creatures? The author is himself a strenuous advocate for this principle, throughout the greater part of this work. In page 144, he remarks that "all the perfection which God requires of any of his creatures, angels, or men, is a measure of knowledge and love bearing an exact proportion to their natural powers."—But why *in exact proportion to their natural powers*, if, in the nature of the case, it was not impossible that their obligations should ever transcend these powers?

The author appears to have been led into this mistake by supposing that whatever was necessary to our salvation, God might justly propose to us, and require of us, as a condition of our salvation: But is not this wholly to overlook the circumstances of the case? Could an offer of salvation, upon any conditions, have been made to fallen man, without the intervention of a Saviour? The language which God must necessarily have held to him, in these circumstances, was that of a righteous Judge, condemning him to everlasting death. A law which could give life, or even propose life, was not admissible; and it was not admissible for this plain reason, that no terms could be named which would be proper for God to accept, and which at the same time the sinner was naturally able to perform. It is believed, therefore, that we should need both a Redeemer and Sanctifier, although it were not just for God to require of us more than we have natural power to fulfil. We should need a Redeemer to make an atonement for us; a work which we could never accomplish, nor be required to accomplish ourselves. We should need a Sanctifier, to renew our hearts, and restore us to the Image of God; not indeed because we have no *natural* power to perform this work; for we have this power, and God requires us to exercise it; but because we are totally depraved, and shall never employ our natural faculties in returning unto God, until moved to it by the operations of his Holy Spirit.

It will be seen that the exceptions taken against the Author's reasoning in this place, apply so far only as the question of *natural* power is concerned.]

1. *That there was not the least need of Christ's dying for us as our Redeemer.* For, did we need him to make any atonement or satisfaction for our sins? Surely no: for God could not justly require of us more satisfaction for our sins than we were able to make; for that would be to require more than we can do.—Did we need him to purchase the divine favour and eternal life for us? Surely no: for God could not justly require any more of us, as a condition of his favour and eternal life, than we ourselves were able to do. Did we need him to purchase an abatement of the law? Surely no: for God could not, in his law, justly require of us more than we could do; and we did not need to have the law brought down lower than this: Well, therefore, might St. Paul tell the Galatians, that *if righteousness came by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.* Gal. ii. 21. For if our doing as well as we can, in the sense before explained, is all that *righteousness* that God can justly require, this alone most certainly would be every way sufficient for our salvation: nor did we need a Saviour any more than the angels in heaven; for we have just as much power *to do as well as we can,* as they have *to do as well as they can.* To say the contrary is a contradiction in express terms.

2. *Nor was there the least need that the Holy Spirit should be sent into the world, to grant any inward assistance, to enable us to do our duty.* For we had a full and perfect power to do all our duty, without any such assistance: for God could not justly require of us any more than we could do; and every one is *able* to do what he *can,* without any assistance.

So that, if this principle be true *that God cannot justly require of us any more than we can do,* it is plain we neither needed a *Redeemer* nor a *Sanctifier:* so that all the infinite pains which God has taken for our redemption and salvation, has been unnecessary and fruitless. To do as well as we could, was all that would have been needful; and this is still as much required as ever: so that we are just where we should have been, if nothing had ever been done for us. So that this notion entirely undermines and subverts the whole *christian religion,* in supposing that all the extraordinary and wonderful provision therein made for the salvation of sinners was needless; for if all was needless, then the whole is perfectly incre-

dible; for it is incredible to suppose that God would do *so much*, and *such great* things, when there was no need of it: so that this notion leads directly to infidelity. Yea, if this principle be true, we may be certain that the gospel is full of deceit; for the gospel every where supposes sinners to have been in a *helpless, undone* state, and that they might justly have been left so, and perished for ever: and it every where represents it as owing entirely to the free grace and infinitely great goodness of God, that he sent his Son into the world to be a Saviour, and the Holy Spirit to be a Sanctifier; *all which*, upon this principle, is notoriously false: for we were not in a *helpless, undone* condition; being able, of ourselves, to do *all* that God could justly require of us, in order to eternal life. Nor did we need to be beholden to God for his grace and goodness, his Son or his spirit; being able, of ourselves, to do *all* that which he could justly require at our hands. Yea, upon this principle, the gospel offers the *highest affront* to human nature, in that it supposes us to be such vile, helpless, undone, guilty wretches, when, indeed, and in truth, we are not. And, therefore, so long as men really believe this notion, they cannot possibly but hate the doctrines of the gospel, and oppose them: and so, in fact, it has always been.

To conclude, therefore, since it is so evident from the *law*, and so evident from the *gospel*, that we are sinful, guilty, helpless, undone creatures, had not we better give in to it, and come down, and lie in the dust, before the Lord, who knows what we are, whether we will own it or no? Had we not better own his law to be holy, just, and good, and acknowledge that we lie at his sovereign mercy, and be willing to be beholden to free grace, through Jesus Christ, for our salvation; since we must do so, or never be saved? What will it profit us to fly in his face, and say, *It is not just for him to require more than we can do, and then damn us for not doing?* when all he requires, is only that we *love God with all our hearts, and our neighbour as ourselves*, which, in the nature of things, is infinitely reasonable; and when all our impotency arises only from our sinfulness, and so, instead of extenuating our fault, only discovers how sinful we are. Surely, since all the world stand guilty before God, really guilty, and are so accounted by him, we

all had best to stop our mouths, and own the sentence just, by which we stand condemned, while it is a time of mercy: for who can tell but God may pity us?

There is but one way now left to evade the force of what has been said. To a strict demonstration, the law is not, and cannot be abated: there is now no way, therefore, but to deny that there *ever was such a law.* But then, if God be what I suppose him to be, to a demonstration the law must be such too: there is no way, therefore, but to deny that there is *any such* GOD! Well, but if God be not what I suppose, *what is he?* Why, we may see the whole scheme, by the following *objection,* in a few words.

OBJ. *God is a being of infinite understanding and almighty power, perfectly disposed to seek the good and happiness of his creatures as his* LAST END. *He loves virtue, and rewards it, merely because it tends to make them happy. He hates vice, and punishes it, merely because it tends to make them miserable: all he has in view, in his commands and prohibitions; in his promises and threatenings, is the good, and nothing but merely the good, of his creatures; yea, he esteems things to be virtuous, merely because they tend to make us happy: and vicious, merely because they tend to make us miserable. And now, therefore, if we look upon things as he does, and prosecute the same end; if we love and practise virtue with a sincere view to our own happiness, as our* LAST END, *we do all that God would have us do. And how can we, if we weigh things, but most heartily and sincerely love so good a God, so kind a father, who so dearly loves us, and so tenderly seeks our good?*

ANS. True, if God were verily *such an one,* the most wicked man in the world could not but love him. Self-love would make it natural. Even *publicans* love those who love them; and are good to those who are kind to them. *Mat.* v. Did men firmly believe God to be such an one, they could not, indeed, possibly be at enmity against him. Self-love would not admit of it. Men would not need any *grace* to make them love God. *Nature* would make them love him. They could not but love him, so long as they love themselves. And now, if God, indeed, be such an one, I readily own there is no truth in my whole scheme: but, from first to last, it is all a mis-

dible; for ... supposition that these and such ... different. this notion ... be such an one; if he aims be true, we ... why does he ever inflict misery for the gospel ... only to make them happy, why *helpless*, ... miserable? Why did he drown the left so, and ... and why does he damn sinners to as owing ... because *justice requires it*: for, upon this ness of ... does not require it. For, upon this scheme, viour, ... this ... justice, deserve no punishment at all. *less*, ... deserves no punishment any further than it is G... blameworthy. A crime is blame-worthy no further than we d... obligations to do otherwise. According to their ... all our obligations to be virtuous result merely from its tendency to make us happy *. Upon their scheme, there-

* The *scheme* which the Author here opposes, is that which founds the obligation to virtue, *solely* upon the tendency of virtue itself to promote individual happiness; a scheme of perfect selfishness, and pregnant with all the absurd consequences which the Author has endeavoured to attach to it.

There is another theory distinct from this, and not liable to the same objections, which founds our obligations to *virtue* upon its tendency to promote public happiness, or the good of God's creatures, collectively considered. This theory, it will be recollected, the Author opposes in a *note*, page 82, where he more than intimates that our obligations to virtue arise, not from *the mere will of God*, nor from *any tendency in virtue* to promote our own happiness, or the happiness of others, but wholly from *the intrinsic moral fitness of things*, considered absolutely. But is there no difficulty in conceiving of the *moral fitness* or *unfitness* of things, aside from their obvious tendency to promote or hinder the happiness of the moral world? True, it may be said that our perceptions of *right* and *wrong* are wholly distinct from those of *happiness* and *misery*. But is it certain that they are wholly distinct from our perceptions of the natural tendency of *right* and *wrong* to produce these different ends? Why does it appear *right* to do justice between man and man, but because public and private happiness evidently require it?

Perhaps, however, upon a strict inquiry, it would appear that our obligations to virtue rest not wholly upon any single principle; but are grounded upon all those *considerations* which, according to various schemes, may be justly admitted as proper motives to virtuous action: such as the *moral fitness* of things; the *tendency* of virtue; the glory of God, and the authority of his law. To reduce all to a single principle, as different theorists have done, is not only to exclude some motive which ought unquestionably to influence our conduct, but to hold up those which are confused, if not unjust, instead of such as are clear and determinate.]

fore, a sinner is to blame for his sins, merely because sin is cross to his own happiness, and tends to make him miserable; there is no other evil in sin but this. This is the only reason why God hates it, is set against it, and disposed to punish it. This is the only reason why he would have them avoid it; and this is the only reason they are to blame for it. No man is blame-worthy for sin any further than he was under obligations to the contrary. All our obligations to virtue, according to them, arise from its natural tendency to make us happy: and, therefore, all the evil of sin must arise from its natural tendency to make us miserable. This misery, therefore, is exactly equal to the evil of sin; for *all* the evil of sin arises from it, or rather *consists* in it. This misery is *all* the evil of sin; and this misery is, therefore, *all* that renders sin blame-worthy, i. e. I am to blame for taking a course that tends to make me miserable. And why? Merely because it tends to make me miserable; for that reason, and for no other. Therefore, I am so much to blame, and no more, for what I do, than according to the degree of its tendency to make me miserable. This misery, therefore, which naturally results from what I do, is equal to my blame; and is, therefore, the *worst*, and *all* that I deserve; for no crime deserves to be punished, any further than it is blame-worthy *. And from the whole, to a demonstration, it follows, that, upon their scheme, sin deserves no inflicted pain or misery, by way of punishment, over and above the pain or misery which results necessarily from its own nature. And now, if sin does not de-

* Obj. "*But are we not, according to their scheme, under obligations resulting from the* authority *and* command *of God?*"

Ans. We are, according to their scheme, under no obligations to regard the *authority* and *command* of God at all; only, and merely, and purely, because it is for our interest so to do; as themselves acknowledge.

Obj. "*But are we not, according to them,* obliged *to have regard to* our neighbour's *welfare?*

Ans. Only, merely, purely because it is for our own interest to do so; for, according to them, all our obligations to practise any virtue, arise, originally, only from its being for our own interest. The language of such a practice plainly is, that there is not one being in the whole system worth regarding, but myself. *I am, and besides me there is no other!* I will regard none, but just to answer my own ends; and so really and strictly, regard none but myself. This is a *religion* that will suit *nature*; and, in this sense, may justly be called *natural religion.*

serve any such punishment, then justice does not require the Governor of the world to inflict any such upon any of his creatures, though ever so sinful; for justice does not require him to inflict a punishment that is not at all deserved; yea, rather it seems cruelty so to do. If, therefore, justice did not require it, why did God drown the *old world*, and burn *Sodom*; and why does he damn sinners to all eternity?

Certainly he did not *aim at their good* when he drowned the *old world* and burnt *Sodom*; and certainly he cannot *aim at sinners' good* in their eternal damnation. There are some calamities in this life, which God might be supposed to send upon his creatures for their good; and indeed, all things considered, they are well adapted to do them good; yea, and are all made to work together for good to them that love God, and may be numbered among their mercies. But what shall we say when God drowns a whole world, burns up several cities, and damns to all eternity millions of his creatures: yea, and all for nothing, when they deserved no ill at his hands, not the least! *Where is his justice now?* Yea, *where is his goodness?* Or what does he mean? What does he intend?

Certainly he cannot intend to deal so severely with some of his poor creatures, who never deserved any ill at his hands, merely for the *good of others*, to fright, and warn, and deter them from vice; for this would be *to do evil that good might come:* yea, this would be the way rather *that good might never come;* for how could any of his creatures or subjects heartily love him or like his conduct, while they behold millions of their fellow-creatures suffering, for nothing at all, such infinite pains under his hands? *Where is his justice?* would they all cry. *And where is his goodness?* They would hate him, and flee from him, and dread a government so infinitely tyrannical. Indeed, to inflict a proper punishment, in case of just desert, is a good thing; tends to maintain government, and make men afraid of sin, and stand in awe of the great Law-giver and Judge of the world. Yea, it is a beautiful conduct, and tends to make God appear aimable in the eyes of all holy beings. *Rev.* xix. 1. 6. But to afflict and torment poor creatures, who do not *at all* deserve it, and that for ever, cannot possibly answer any good end; but of neces-

sity, must promote a thousand bad ones, when, all the time, the true state of the case is publicly known and understood throughout all God's dominions. It is just as if a father, who has ten children, should tie up five every Monday morning, and whip them almost to death for nothing in the world but to make the rest love him, and be good and obedient children. And would they love him any the more for this? Yea, they could not but hate so cruel a tyrant. Now, therefore, if their scheme be true, why did God drown the *old world*, and burn *Sodom*? And why does he damn sinners to all eternity?

Yea, if sin deserves no inflicted punishment, as, upon their scheme, it does not, why does God ever once inflict the least, the very least punishment for it in all his dominions? And that which, though not, in its own nature, more unaccountable, yet is more surprising, why has God, all along from the beginning of the world, been inflicting such a dreadful train of punishments for sin? Why did God turn the *angels* out of heaven for their first sin, and doom them to an eternal hell, when they did not at all deserve it? Why did God threaten Adam with death in case of disobedience? Why is death said to be the wages of sin? Why did God cause the earth to open and swallow up Korah and his company? Why did God cause the carcasses of six hundred thousand to fall in the wilderness? Why did God strike Uzza dead? And why a thousand more things which have happened in the sight of the world? Surely it cannot be for *our good* to be struck dead and sent to hell; and surely it cannot be for the *good of any* in all God's world, that shall see or ever hear of it, when, all the while, it is publicly known that we deserve no ill at God's hands: no, not the least.

And now, after all, to torment us in hell for ever, for nothing in the world, *where the fire shall never be quenched, and the worm shall never die*; yea, and to appoint a day of jugdment, under a pretence of doing nothing but strict justice; and to summon all the worlds together, to see and hear, to the end that his impartiality and justice might appear to all, when, all the while, he knows, and all the world knows, that his poor

creatures deserve no ill at his hands; no, not the least! *What can he mean?*

Yea, and that which is a great deal worse than all, that I even shudder to think of it, he not only makes a law to punish sinners eternally in hell, when there was no reason for it, but puts it in execution upon his poor creatures who do not deserve it; but having one only Son, of equal glory with himself, he delivers him to death, in the room and stead of sinners; pretending that sin was so bad a thing, *that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission,* and therefore his own Son must die, to the end *he might be just, while he justified the sinner that should believe in him;* while, all the time, if their scheme is true, he knew, and all the world will know, sooner or later, that sin never deserved the least punishment at his hands!

To conclude, therefore, if God be what they suppose, I grant the scheme I have laid down is not right; and it is equally evident that the *Bible* is not right neither: for the *law* and the *gospel,* the *Old Testament* and the *New,* every where suppose, and take it for granted, that sin is an infinite evil; deserves the wrath and curse of God: all the miseries of this life, and death itself, and the pains of hell for ever; the *law* threatens all this. According to the *gospel,* Christ has died to redeem us from all this, as what we *justly deserve.* The *Bible,* therefore, in a word, supposes we deserve it all; but their *scheme* supposes we do not. The God that made the *Bible* has no doubt of it; he made his *law* upon this ground, and upon this footing he gave his Son to die: has appointed a day of judgment, and prepared a place of torment; *a lake of fire and brimstone:* but *their God* is of quite another mind: can see no such infinite evil in sin; yea, no evil at all in it, but what results from its tendency to make us miserable. *Their God,* therefore, is not *the God of Israel,* nor *the God that made the Bible;* and, therefore, is *no God:* is nothing but an image framed in their own fancy, suited to their own hearts.

Besides, their *idea of God* is contrary, not only thus to the general tenour of scripture, but also to many plain and express declarations. (1.) It is manifest that God does not make the happiness of his creatures his *last end,* from *Exod.* ix. 16. *Numb.* xiv. 13—21. *Lev.* x. 3. *Psalm* cvi. 8. *Ezek.* xx.

throughout; *Ezek.* xxxvi. 21, 22, 23. and xxxviii. 23. and xxxix. 6, 7. 13. 21, 22. *Rom.* ix. 22, 23. *Rom.* xi. 36. *Rev.* iv. 11. (2.) It is manifest that God does not require his creatures to love and obey him merely because it tends to make them happy so to do, from *Exod.* xx. 2. *Lev.* xix. 2. *Psalm* xxix. 2. and xcvi. 4. 8. and cxlviii. 13. 1 *Cor.* vi. 20. (3.) It is manifest that God does not threaten and punish sin merely because it tends to make his creatures miserable, from 1 *Sam.* ii. 29, 30. 2 *Sam.* xii. 7—14. *Plasm* li. 4. *Mal.* i. 6, 7, 8. 14.

But to conclude: How sad and dreadful a thing will it be, for poor sinners, when they come to die, and enter into the world of spirits, there to find that the God they once loved and trusted in, was nothing but an image framed in their own fancy! They hated the *God of Israel,* and hated his *law,* and therefore would not believe that *God* or his *law* were indeed what they were. They were resolved to have a *God* and a *law* more to their minds. How dreadful will their disappointment be! How dreadful their surprise! They would never own they were enemies to God; now they see their enmity was so great as to make them resolutely, notwithstanding the plainest evidence, even to deny him to be what he was. And how righteous will the ways of the Lord appear to be, in that he gave such over to strong delusions to believe a lie, who did not love, and would not believe the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness? 2 *Thes.* ii. 10, 11, 12. So, the *Gentile Nations,* not liking to retain God in their knowledge, were given over to reprobate minds, and left every nation to make *such a God* as best pleased themselves. *Rom.* i. But it is time to proceed to the next *use.*

SECTION VI.

RULES OF TRIAL.

Use II. Which may be *of examination.* What has been said may serve to clear up, to real saints, their gracious state, and may afford matter of conviction to others.

And here I would take the humble believer in his element, that is, in his closet, where he retires from the noise and busi-

ness of the world; where he loves to be alone, to read the Bible; to meditate on the perfections of God, and think of his works and ways; where he mourns, and prays, and loves God, and gives up himself to him. In a serious hour of sweet retirement, when you are *most yourself*, and your thoughts most about you, I would inquire, *What are your views? And what is the inward temper of your mind? And how do you live? And what is it that habitually influences you in your daily conduct?*

Do you *know* God? Do you see him to be such an one as he really is; even such an one as the scriptures represent him to be? And do you account him infinitely glorious and amiable in being such an one? And do you begin to love him with all your heart? Do you esteem him so as to exult in his supremacy and absolute sovereignty? And so will seek his glory, and value his honour and interest, as to give up yourself to live to him; and so delight in him, as to choose him for your present and everlasting portion? True, your remaining blindness and ignorance is very great: but do you not feel it, and groan under it as your burden, and hate yourself for it as your sin, lamenting the sottishness of your heart, that you should be so senseless and brutish, after so many outward advantages and inward helps, and amidst such clear manifestations made of God and of his infinite glory, in his word, and in all his works and ways; and feel that you are wholly to blame for the stupidity and unteachableness of your heart; ready to say with him of old, *So foolish am I, and ignorant, I am as a beast before thee?* Psalm lxxiii. 22. Your disesteem of God and unconcernedness about his honour and interest is great, and you have still a disposition to hate to live upon God only, without any thing else to take comfort in, as the portion of your soul; and so you are inclined to forget God, to forsake him, to depart, and go away, and fall in love with something else, and seek another resting-place, and something else to take comfort in. But do you not feel this your remaining want of conformity to God's law, and native contrariety to it? And do you not hate it, and hate yourself for it? Do you not groan under it, and lament it, and watch, and pray, and fight against it, feeling the infinite sinfulness of it? saying, *The*

law is holy, just, and good; but I am carnal, sold under sin. O wretched man that I am! Rom. vii. 14. 24.

And what are the *grounds* of your love to God, and from what motives is it that you are influenced to love him? Does God, indeed, appear infinitely great, glorious, and amiable in being what he is? And do you love him because he is just such an one? Do you love to meditate his incomprehensibly glorious perfections, and wonder and adore? Are you glad that he knows all things, and can do every thing? Are the various manifestations of divine wisdom, in the moral government of the world, glorious in your eyes? Does it suit your heart that God governs the world as he does? Do you love that the pride of all flesh should be brought low, and the Lord alone be exalted? Are you glad that God loves righteousness and hates iniquity as he does; and do you heartily approve the strictness of his law in the matter of your duty, and the severity thereof against the least sin? And are you sweetly sensible of the infinite goodness of God, and of his truth and faithfulness? And does God appear infinitely glorious because he is just what he is? And is this the primary foundation of your love? In a word, do you see him as the great Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the world; as the Redeemer, Sanctifier, and Saviour of his people, as he has thus revealed himself, by his word, and in his works; and do you love him for being what he is? And do you also feel the powerful influence of those superadded obligations you are under to love him? In other cases, when we love any thing, we know why we love it: so, also, do believers know why they love the Lord their God.

And does it not appear to you infinitely *reasonable* that you should love God with all your heart; that you should be wholly his, and wholly for him, and make him your all, while you behold his infinite glory; his complete all-sufficiency; his original, entire right to you, and absolute authority over you? And does not his law, in requiring you to do so, appear to be infinitely right, perfectly holy, just, and good; worthy to stand in full force for ever, unabated and unaltered? And do you not see that the least want of conformity to this law, or transgression of it, is infinitely vile, and that a perfect conformity thereto deserves no thanks? And do you not feel

yourself wholly to blame for your not being altogether such as the law requires? Hypocrites are generally very ignorant of the law, in its true meaning and strictness; and so are ignorant of their want of conformity unto it, and of their inward contrariety to it, *Rom.* vii. 8, 9.; for otherwise all hypocrites would know certainly that they have no grace. But yet hypocrites, at least many of them, know something about the law, and their want of conformity to it, and something about their inward contrariety to it; and hence may complain of the blindness of their minds, the deadness of their hearts, and of their pride and worldliness: but no hypocrite is heartily sensible that the law is holy, just, and good in requiring perfection; and that he himself is entirely to blame for not being perfectly holy, and that the fault is wholly his. Some will say, "I desire to love God, and to aim at his glory, and do my duty; but no man is, or can be perfect: and God does not require more of us than we can do." And so they think themselves excusable, and are not sensible that it is infinitely vile in them not to love God with all their hearts. Others will say, "I can do nothing of myself: it is Christ that must do all. I desire to love God, but I cannot. It is the spirit that must fill my heart with love, and God is the sovereign dispenser of his grace; so that, if I am dead, and dull, and senseless, and stupid, I cannot help it." And so they also think themselves excusable, and are not sensible that it is infinitely vile in them not to love God with all their hearts. But now, how stands the case with you? Have you any secret way of excusing yourself? Or do you see that the law is holy, just, and good, and that you only are to blame, wholly to blame, and altogether without excuse; yea, and exceedingly vile, for all your blindness and deadness, and for every thing wherein you are not just what the law requires you to be? It is this which makes believers sensible of their desert of damnation, all their lives long, and loathe and abhor themselves before the Lord: and it is this which causes them more and more to see their need of Christ and free grace, and admire and prize the glorious gospel. *O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Rom. vii. 24, 25.

And do you begin to be of a disposition really to love your *neighbour* as *yourself?* Are your affections under the government of a spirit of disinterested impartiality, so that you are disposed to value yourself only for those properties in you that are good and excellent, and only in proportion to their worth and excellence; and, by this rule, to esteem your neighbours, your friends, and your foes, and all men? And do you hate a contrary disposition in you? And is your heart full of love, and kindness, and benevolence, wishing well to all, seeking the good of all, and even grieved when your enemies are in adversity?

And to conclude: Does love to God and to your neighbour govern you in your thoughts, affections, and actions, and daily influence you to live to God, and do good in the world; so that now you are not your own, but given up to God, to do his will, seeking his glory? A holy life does as naturally proceed from a holy heart, as a stream does from a living fountain.

Once you was darkness; but are you now light in the Lord? Once, as to right, spiritual views of God, your neighbour, or yourself; of this world or the next, you had none: you was blind; your understanding was darkened; and so your apprehensions, were wrong, and you loved your wrong apprehensions, and took pleasure in error, falsehood, and sin: and hated the light; hated truth and duty: once you was wholly devoid of the divine image, and destitute of all good; yea, and you was wholly averse from God, and full of all evil. And did you ever see and feel this to be your state? And have you, by divine grace, been recovered out of it? Have you been effectually taught that your light was darkness, and your knowledge ignorance, and been made sensible of the blindness of your mind? And have you learnt that all your seeming goodness was counterfeit, and that in you did dwell no good thing; yea, that your seeming goodness was real wickedness, in that your heart was in perfect contrariety to God and his law? Has divine light shined in your heart, and your native darkness, as well as contracted blindness, been dispelled from your soul; so that now your views of God; of your neighbour and yourself; of this world and the next, are right, and your apprehensions according to truth? And has the truth made you free?

Do you now look upon God, in some measure, according to the capacity of a creature, as he does upon himself, when he takes upon him the character of most high GOD, supreme LORD, and sovereign GOVERNOR of the whole world, and says, *I am the Lord: that is my name, and besides me there is no other God?* And do you see it is infinitely fit that all the world should love, worship, and adore him? Do you now look upon your neighbours in some measure as God does, when he commands you to love them as yourself; and so see that it is perfectly right that you should? And do you look upon yourself, and every thing in this world, in some measure as God does, when he commands you to deny yourself, and forsake all things for his sake; and see that it is most fit and reasonable to die to yourself and to this world, and give up yourself to God, to love him, and live to him, and delight in him for ever? And do you understand that the things which are seen are temporal, and that the things which are unseen are eternal? And do all possible troubles in the ways of God, in some measure, appear only as light afflictions, which are but for a moment, and not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed? Do you thus know the truth; and has the truth made you free from your old servitude; and are you effectually influenced and governed by these views and apprehensions, and this sense of things, to bring forth fruit to God an hundred-fold, or sixty-fold, or at least thirty-fold? For divine knowledge is efficacious, and the holy and divine effects and fruits are always equal to the degree of knowledge. (1 John iii. 6.) *And every branch which bringeth not forth fruit, is cut off and cast into the fire.* Are you thus born again, and become a new creature, and learnt to live a new and divine life?

And is it not now most manifest to you that all this is so far from having been the product of nature, that all that is in nature, every natural propensity of the heart, has, from first to last, been utterly against the change, and made a constant and mighty resistance? And do you not plainly perceive, that, from first to last, the work has been begun and carried on by God himself?

And does it not appear to you as the most astonishing goodness in God, and owing to nothing but his sovereign free grace, that you have thus been called out of darkness into marvellous light; turned from the power of sin and Satan, to serve the living God? And do you not plainly see there is nothing but the same infinite goodness and free grace to move God to carry on and complete this work in your heart, and that so, if ever you get to heaven, the whole of your salvation, from first to last, will be absolutely and entirely to be attributed to free grace? And have you not hence learnt to live upon free grace, through Jesus Christ, for all things?

And do you not perceive that he, who has begun, does *actually* carry on the work of grace in your hearts? And that all the external dispensations of providence and internal influences of the spirit concur in their operation, to humble you, and wean you from the world, and embitter sin; to bring you nearer to God and to love him, and to live to him, and to live upon him; and to make you more serious; more spiritually-minded and heavenly-minded; more watchful and prayerful, and more loving, and kind, and tender-hearted, and obliging to all mankind, both friends and foes; and to make you daily attend upon the duties of your particular calling, and upon all the common business of life, as a servant of God, in singleness of heart, doing service to the Lord?

And although you was once *dead in sin*, and wholly without strength, yet do you not now feel that you are spiritually alive, and so put into a capacity for a spiritual activity, and that you are engaged to be active for God? *Not that your sufficiency is of yourself*, as once you thought it was: for you *are not sufficient of yourself, as of yourself; but your sufficiency is of God.* Yet do you not find that, *through Christ's strengthening, you can do all things?* And do you not from the heart hate the way of lazy, dead-hearted hypocrites, who sit still, and carelessly cry, "We can do nothing; it is Christ that must do all;" and, under a notion of not doing any thing in their own strength, gratify their laziness, and do nothing at all! Accursed laziness! Accursed hypocrisy! Do you not feel, I say, that you are put into a capacity for spiritual activity? And are you not engaged to be active for God?

For you are *his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works,* that you might *walk in them.* While the spirit of God is taking down the power of sin in your heart, and slaying your corruptions, are you not also *crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts?* While God is *working in you to will and to do,* are you not *working out your salvation with fear and trembling;* with filial fear and holy concern? While the spirit of God gives you *might in the inner man,* do not you *put on the whole armour of God, and fight with flesh and blood;* with *principalities and powers?* This is the way of believers. And the spirit does not come upon them by fits, as it did upon Balaam, but dwells in them and abides in them for ever, *to purify them from all iniquity, and make them a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

Finally, do you not experience that your religion is something *real* and *perceptible,* and see that it is *specifically* different from any thing that possibly can arise merely from a principle of self-love? You perceive your views of God, and sense of his greatness, glory, and beauty; and you perceive your sense of the world's emptiness, and of your own natural vileness and wretchedness; and your love to God; your weanedness from the world, and your mourning for sin, are perceptible. And is it not easy to perceive why you love God; are weaned from the world, and mourn for sin; namely, because God is infinitely lovely, the world empty and worthless, and sin the greatest evil? And while these views and affections effectually influence you to all holy living, their genuineness is made still more evident and plain: and from the whole, you arise to a rational and scriptural knowledge of your gracious state.

From what has been said upon this subject, a great variety of other questions might be put to the believer; but the whole has been treated so plainly and practically, that I need add no more. And if graceless persons had it in their hearts to be honest and impartial, they might easily know that they are strangers to real religion. But if they have not the thing itself, they will either work up something like it, or else deny that there is any such thing: for *he that doeth evil hateth the light;* and so does he who has a rotten heart. And hence

some cry, "The best have their failings;" and they watch and catch at the failings of such as are accounted godly, and dwell upon them, and magnify them; and so quiet their consciences, and go on in their sins. Others cry, "The best are dead sometimes;" and so maintain their hopes, although they lie dead whole months and years together, and live in sin, and never come to sound repentance. Others cry, "You will discourage weak christians;" meaning themselves. Just as if there were a sort of christians that cannot bear the light, nor stand a scriptural trial. What will they do when they come before the awful bar of the heart-searching God! Others cry, "But every christian does not experience alike;" and so, though they are destitute of the very essence and life of religion, yet they hope all is well; and many are confident that these things are not so. "For," say they, "if these things be true, who then shall be saved?" I answer, *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leads to life; and few there be that find it. But wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many go in thereat.* Mat. vii. 13, 14. And mark what follows in the next verse, (15.) *Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves.* (ver. 16.) *Ye shall know them by their fruits.* By what fruits? Why, this is the constant character of false prophets throughout the Bible, that they cry, *Peace and safety, and heal the wound of poor sinners slightly, and daub with untempered mortar;* i. e. they make religion to be an easier thing than it is; more agreeable to corrupt nature; and so encourage sinners to rest in something short of true grace. So the *Pharisees* did, notwithstanding all their pretended strictness; and so the *Arminians* do, notwithstanding all their seeming zeal for good works; and so the *Antinomians* do, notwithstanding all their pretences to extraordinary light, and joy, and zeal, and purity, and holiness. And this is the common character of all false prophets, and false teachers, and heretics, that, being enemies to true religion, they cut out a false scheme in their heads, to suit their own hearts; and so, however greatly they may differ, in many things, yet herein all agree, to make religion an easier thing than the Bible does, and to make the gate wider, and

Christ and his apostles; and, by this difference between them and the true prophets may certainly known: and therefore Christ having just it is the gate, and narrow the way, &c. immediately are of false prophets, by their fruits ye shall know they all invent some easier way to heaven, though in sheep's clothing, i. e. under a show of great and this their invention, being *false*, they are thus *false prophets*. And thus, what has been said e nature of true religion, may serve to clear up gracious state; and may afford matter of convic-

SECTION VII.

GREAT REASON TO BE HUMBLE, AND THANK- AND LIVE ENTIRELY DEVOTED TO GOD.

I. *Of humiliation.* What has been said may be d by *sinners* and *saints* to promote their humiliation. the law is the knowledge of sin; and a sight and sense sinfulness tends to abase us before the Lord.

In this glass of the *law*, *sinners* may see what they are, in heart and life; and, by this rule, they may learn *how* God looks upon them. There is a knowledge of ourselves; of our hearts and lives, that is *natural* to us. Men, by their power of self-reflection, have a sort of an acquaintance with themselves: they know their present views and designs; their present inclinations and way of living; and remember, more or less, how they have lived in years past. But men are naturally very ignorant of the nature of God, and of his holy law; and so are very ignorant of themselves in a *moral* sense; are very insensible *how* God looks upon them, and what their hearts and lives are, compared with God and his holy law. *Natural conscience* has some notions about right and wrong, and so does something towards accusing and condemning men, especially for their grosser sins; but natural conscience is for the most part so blind, and so much asleep, and in most men has been so much abused, and brow-beat, and kept under, by men pretty much alone. Men *hold the truth in*

unrighteousness, according to the *Apostle's* phrase, and keep their consciences in chains; and so are, in a great measure, *without the law*; and hence, *sin is dead*: for *where there is no law there is no transgression*: and when men know not the law in its true meaning and extent, they are insensible how they swerve from it, and how contrary they are to it, and how sinful sin is: but *when the commandment comes, sin revives*.

Think of this, therefore, O sinner, that the infinitely glorious God, your Creator, Preserver, and Governor, deserves to be loved, and lived to, and delighted in with all your heart; and that this is what he requires at your hands: and know it, he hates your hypocritical shows and pretences, so long as that, in heart, he sees you are an enemy to him. You may pretend that you cannot help your heart's being so bad; but God knows you love your corruptions, and hate to have them slain, and love to have them gratified. You love to be proud, and hence you love to be applauded; and the praise of men is sweet, and of greater price with you than the praise of God: you will do more to please the world than to please God; yea, will displease God, to keep in with a wicked world, who hate God; and God knows it. You love to love the world; and hence love to lay worldly schemes, and are secretly ravished with worldly hopes when things are likely to go well, and account no pains too great in worldly pursuits; but you hate to pray in secret; have no heart for God; can take no delight in him; and God knows it. And will you now pretend, for your excuse, that you cannot help your heart's being so bad, when it is *you yourself* that are so bad, and love to be so bad, and hate to cease to be what you are? If God has, by his spirit, awakened your conscience a little, and terrified you with the fears of hell and wrath, it may be your corruptions are somewhat stunned, and honour and worldly gains do not appear so tempting, and you are ready to say that you would willingly part with your reputation, and every thing you have in the world, for an interest in Christ and the divine favour; and now you think you are sincere: but God knows it is all hypocrisy; for he sees you do not care for him, but are only afraid of damnation. And God knows that, if once you should get a false confi-

dence of pardon and the divine favour, you would soon return to folly, as the dog to his vomit, and set out after the world as eagerly as ever; or else vent your corruptions in spiritual pride, and in ranting, enthusiastic wild-fire, and party selfish zeal, as thousands have done, who once felt just as you do now. God, therefore, does not mind your pretences, nor believe your promises; for he knows what you are. You may deceive yourself, but cannot deceive him. He knows your corruptions are stunned, but not mortified; and that your nature is just what it was, and you as really an enemy to God as ever. And, it may be, *you* may see it yet, when you come to find out *how* God looks upon you, and upon your prayers, and tears, and promises: for it is commonly the case with sinners, when they perceive that God is not pleased with their devout pretences, and does not design to save them for their hypocritical duties, by the secret workings of their hearts to discover that they care only for themselves, and are real enemies to God and his law. Love to God, O sinner, is not begotten by the fears of hell, nor by the hopes of heaven. If you do not love God for what he is in himself, you do not love him at all; but only flatter him with your lips, and lie unto him with your tongue. But it may be manifest to you that you do not love him for what he is in himself, because you do not love his law, which bears his image. You do not like the law as a rule for you to live by, for it is too strict for you: and you do not approve of the law as a rule for God to judge you by, for you think it hard for God to damn men for the least sin. Know it, therefore, O sinner, that there is no good in you, or any goodness in your duties; but you are in a state of rebellion: an enemy to God, and to his holy law: come down, and lie in the dust before the Lord, and own the sentence just by which you stand condemned, and be quiet at his feet; and if ever he saves you, for ever attribute it wholly to free and sovereign grace. *When the commandment came sin revived, and I died.* And such an one was you, O believer; and, in some measure, you are such an one still; and, in some respects, your sins are a great deal more aggravated. Oh! never forget the days, and weeks, and months, and years you have formerly spent in sin! *Once I was a persecutor and*

a *blasphemer, and injurious,* said St. Paul; and his heart bleeds afresh, and he sets himself down for the *chief of sinners.* 1 Tim. i. 13. 15. But what are you now, after all the grace of God; after all the kind methods heaven has taken to reclaim you: and what are your attainments, if you compare yourself and attainments with the holy law of God, in its spiritual nature and divine strictness? Do you feel such a heart towards the great and glorious Governor of the whole world, as becomes you? Think what a God he is, and how angels and saints on high love him. Think of his majesty, and greatness, and glory, and excellence; and how he is the fear, and delight, and joy of all heaven. Think of his original and entire right to you, and absolute authority over you. Think of the vileness of your apostacy, and of the depth of your ruin, Think of redeeming love. Think of converting grace. Think of the many means God has used with you in his providence, and by his spirit. Think of all his loving kindnesses and tender mercies. And think what a beast you are before the Lord! Lie down in the dust, and cry, and mourn, and weep, and let your heart break! Oh, your want of love to God; of zeal for his glory: of delight in his perfections, and of gratitude for all his kindness! Alas, how you disesteem the God that angels love, and comparatively despise the God that all heaven adores? Alas, how careless you are about his honour and interest, and how inactive in his service! Alas, how you disrelish the fountain of all goodness, and the ocean of all blessedness, and hanker after other things, and go away from God, to seek rest elsewhere, and thereby cast infinite contempt upon the delight of heaven, and the joy of angels, the ever-blessed and all-sufficient God! Think of the peculiar obligations God has laid you under by all the secret ways of his providence and grace with you, and of all the infinite pains he has taken with you to make you humble; weaned from the world; devoted to God; loving, kind, tender-hearted, friendly, and obliging to all mankind, and universally holy; and see, and say, 'Was ever wretch so vile! Did ever wretch treat such a God in such a manner, under such circumstances!' Oh, how far, how infinitely far, you are from being what you ought to be! This made St. Paul account him

self *less than the least of all saints, and forget the things that are behind:* his attainments dwindled away, as it were, to nothing, when he compared himself with God's holy law, and thought what he ought to be, and what obligations he was under; and he did, therefore, as it were, set down all that he had hitherto attained for nothing, and feel and act as if he was but just now beginning to live to God. Rom. vii. 14. *The Law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin;* verse 24. *O wretched man that I am!* Phil. iii. 13, 14. *I forget the things which are behind; I reach forth towards those things which are before; I press towards the mark:* and, O believer! go you, and do likewise.

Besides, remember that it is no thanks to you that you are not to this day secure in sin; yea, that you are not one of the vilest and most profane creatures in the world. Your nature was bad enough; the seeds of every sin were in your heart; but for restraining or sanctifying grace, you might have been as bad as any in Sodom. And what was it moved God to awaken you, and stop you in your career in sin, and turn you to God? Was it for your righteousness? Oh, be ashamed and confounded for ever! For his own sake he has done it, when you was a stubborn stiff-necked, rebellious creature. And truly, what has been your carriage towards the Lord, compared with the exact rule of duty, the holy law of God, since the day you have known him? O, remember *Massah*, and *Taberra*, and *Kirboth-hataavah*, and how you have been rebellious against the Lord, ever since he has taken you in hand to subdue you to himself. (Read *Deut.* ix. and see how much your temper has been like theirs.) And this notwithstanding all the signs and wonders God has wrought before your eyes: I mean, notwithstanding all the sweet and awful methods God has taken with you, to make you know him, and love him, and fear him, and live to him. There are thousands and thousands whom God never took any such special pains with: their sins are not like yours: Come down therefore; sit in the dust; mourn and weep, and loathe and abhor yourself, as long as you live; and ascribe all praise to God, through whose grace alone it is that you are what you are.

Let me here address you in the words of the famous Mr. HOOKER: "That thou mayest for ever, each day that passeth over thy head, remember it to the Lord, and leave it upon record in thine own conscience, say, Hadst thou, (blessed Lord,) given me the desires of my heart, and left me to my own will, it is certain I had been in hell long before this day, when, in the days of my folly and times of my ignorance; when, out of the desperate wretchedness of my rebellious disposition, I was running riot in the ways of wickedness; *when I said to the seers, see not, and to the prophets, prophesy not;* to Christians, to acquaintance, to governors, admonish not, counsel not, reprove not, stop me not in the pursuit of sin. The time was, *I took hold of deceit, and refused to return;* nay, resolved in the secret purpose of my heart, *I would none of thee;* I would not have that word of thine reveal or remove my corruptions; I would none of thy grace that might humble me and purge me: none of that mercy of thine that might pardon me: none of that redemption of thine that might save me. Hadst thou then taken me at my word, and given me what I wished, and sealed my destruction, saying, 'Be thou for ever filthy, for ever stubborn, and for ever miserable; thou wouldst neither be holy nor happy; thou shalt have thy will; sin with devils, and take thy portion with devils.' Lord, it had been just with thee, and I justly miserable. But to bear with all my baseness; to put up with all those wrongs and provocations; to strive with me for my good, when I took up arms against thee, and strove against my own good; nay, when I resisted mercy; and then to take away that resistance, and to cause me to take mercy, and make it mine, when I used all the skill I could to hinder my own salvation. Oh! the height, the depth, the length, the breadth of this mercy! When we feel our hearts to be puffed up with the vain apprehension of our own worth, parts, or performances; what we are and what we do, look we back to our first beginnings, and judge aright of our own wretchedness and nothingness, yea, worse than nothing, in that we not only wanted all good, but we had it within us to oppose all good; and that will cause us to sit down in silence, abased for ever. When empty bladders are grown unto too great bulk and bigness, to prick them is the

readiest way to lessen them: when our empty and vain minds swell with high thoughts, and high, over-weaning conceit of our own worth, learn we to stab and pierce our hearts with the righteous judgment of our own natural vileness, which will (or at least may) let out that frothy haughtiness that lifts us up beyond our measure. Tell thy heart, and commune with thy conscience, and say, It is not my good nature, that I am not roaring amongst the wretches of the world, in the road and broad way of ruin and destruction; that I am not wallowing in all manner of sin with the worst of men. It is not my good nature, no thanks to any thing that I have, that I am not upon the chain with malefactors, or in a dungeon with witches; for whatever hell hath, it is in this heart of mine naturally; a Cain here, a Judas here, nay, a devil here. The time was, (O that, with an abased heart, I may ever think of that time!) I never looked after the spiritual good of my soul, or whether I had a soul or no: what would become of me, and it was the least of my care: the furthest end of my thoughts; nay, loath was I to hear of, or know these things; when they were revealed, unwilling to receive them, or give way to them when they were offered. How did I stop mine ears, shut mine eyes, and harden my heart? What ways, means, and devices did I use and invent, to shut out the light of truth; to stop the passage and power of the word, that it might not convince me; that it might not reform me; might not recall me from my evil ways? How often have I secretly wished that either the word was taken out of the place, or I from it, that it might not trouble me in my sinful distempers; and when I had least good, I had most ease, and took the greatest content. Oh, that such a wretch should thus live and yet live! To be thus sinful! O that I might be for ever abased for it*."

Thus the law, as a rule of life, may be improved to the humiliation of the people of God, in that it may serve to keep fresh in their minds their native universal depravity; their former wickedness; and to discover their remaining sinfulness. And I may here observe, that it is believers' *peculiar acquaintance* with the law, in its true meaning, strictness, and purity, that is the occasion of their *peculiar acquaintance*

* Mr. HOOKER's *Application of Redemption*. VOL. I. page 97—100.

with their own hearts. And while the law daily shows them what they are, it learns them more and more their need of a redeemer and sanctifier, and daily puts them upon going to God, through Jesus Christ, for pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace. The law makes way for the gospel; and a sense of sin, weakness, and unworthiness, makes Christ and gospel-grace precious, and stirs up a man to repentance, faith, and prayer. Deluded, therefore, are those poor souls that say, "We must not look into our hearts, nor labour after a sense of our sins and sinfulness; for that is legal, and tends to discouragement: but we must look only to Christ and free grace, and believe and rejoice, and a sense of the love of Christ will humble us." Just as if the great business of Christ was, to keep men from a sight and sense of their sins; and just as if a man could be truly humbled, without seeing what he is, compared with God and his holy law. But, poor souls, they feel a legal, discouraged frame always, when they have any sight and sense of their sinfulness, and it damps their faith, (and if they were but thoroughly sensible of their sinfulness, it would kill their faith) and joy: and, therefore, they conclude it is not a good way to look into their hearts; no good can be got by it. But when they do not mind their hearts, but look steadily to Christ and free grace, (a fancied Christ!) firmly believing that all he has done and suffered is for them, and realizing the matter to themselves, now they feel sweetly and joyfully; and therefore conclude that this is the way, the only way, to get good for our souls; and hence grow mighty enemies to the law; to self-examination; to sense of sin, &c. This is the door by which, if any man enters in, he will soon become an *Antinomian* and an *Enthusiast*. But, to proceed,

USE IV. *Of thankfulness.* While the law shows us what we are, it does, at the same time, make us sensible what we deserve; while it discovers to us our sinfulness, it makes us feel our unworthiness of any good, and desert of all evil: and while we feel our unworthiness and ill deserts, our afflictions appear far less than we deserve, and our mercies appear more in number than the sands, and the kindness and bounty of our God appears exceedingly great, and we wonder at his goodness, and bless his holy name. And thus the law is of use to promote thankfulness.

God, the great Governor of the world, in testimony of his high displeasure against mankind for their apostacy from him, has spread miseries and calamities all round the earth. From the king upon the throne to the beggar on the dung-hill, there is not one but has a greater or lesser share in the troubles of life; and many have their days filled up with sorrows. And now murmurings arise all round this guilty world, and the general cry is, "Nobody meets with such troubles as I do. I am very hardly dealt with." But the law teaches us that God is holy in all these his ways, and righteous in all these his works; and that we are all punished far less than we deserve; and so our complaints are silenced, and our hearts quieted into humble submission, and it appears infinitely fit, a rebellious world should be full of wo, that we might learn that it is an evil and bitter thing to forsake the Lord.

But, at the same time, God, the great Lord of all, out of his boundless goodness through Jesus Christ, reprieves mankind from the *threatened* ruin: strews common mercies with a liberal hand all round the earth; sends rain and fruitful seasons, and fills the hearts of all, more or less, with food and gladness; and to some he grants his special grace, makes them his children, and entitles them to eternal life. And thus *he is the Saviour of all men, but especially of those that believe.* 1 Tim. iv. 10. Yet this goodness of God is but little taken notice of in the world. But the law, while it discovers what we are, and how unworthy and hell-deserving we are, makes us sensible of the freeness and riches of God's grace in these kindnesses. For, while we feel that hell is our proper due, every thing that renders our case better than that of the damned, we shall accept as a choice mercy, and as an effect of free grace; and so, instead of being always in a murmuring and repining disposition, we shall be always wondering at the goodness, admiring at the kindness of the Lord; saying, with good Jacob, *We are not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant,* Gen. xxxii. 10.; and with the Jewish Church, *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.* Psalm cxxxvi. And we shall always find that the more sensible we are of our unworthiness and ill desert, the more

cause we shall see for thankfulness, let our outward circumstances in this life be what they will. But,

USE V. In the last place, let all that has been said be improved, by way of *exhortation, to excite and engage the people of God more and more to renounce themselves, the world, and sin, and give up themselves to God, to love him, and live to him, and delight in him, with all their hearts, for ever.*

You have seen what grounds you have to do so, arising from God's infinite greatness, glory, and excellence; and you have been viewing your superadded obligations. And is the Lord such a God, and is he your God and Redeemer? O how strongly are you bound to keep all his commandments! And what is it, O believer, that the Lord thy God requireth of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul? And is there not, in keeping his commands, a great reward? Did you ever taste such sweetness as in a life of devotedness to God? And have not your wanderings from him cost you many a bitter and mournful hour? O, how happy would you be, if once you could come to it, to have done with every thing else, and to be wholly the Lord's! Seriously consider these things:

1. *That you can come to it, to have done with every thing else, and be wholly the Lord's, at least in a vastly greater degree than ever yet you have.* See *Phil.* iii. 13, 14. You actually already have God *working in you to will and to do.* Phil. ii. 13. He has always been, as it were, labouring to humble you, and wean you from the world, and bring you nearer to himself, to love him, live to him, and delight in him, ever since the day you first came to know him, by the outward dispensations of his providence, and by the inward strivings of his spirit. He has always been *purging you, that you might bring forth more fruit.* John xv. 2. Yea, this was the very design of Christ's coming into the world, that he *might deliver you out of the hands of all your enemies, and bring you to serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of your life;* Luke i. 74.; and that he *might redeem you from all iniquity, and purify you to himself, that you might be peculiarly his, and zealous of good works.* Tit. ii. 14. And for this end, God has

[illegible] REGENERATED, AND

[illegible] pains with you, and this is [illegible] you unto, and he declares that [illegible] *Holy Spirit, than earthly parents* [illegible] *children*, and invites, and encourages, [illegible] *ask*. Mat. vii. 7, &c. And will you [illegible] arise, and put on the whole armour of [illegible] strongest efforts to recover from sin to

[illegible] King of heaven and earth, commands you to [illegible] kind Mediator, invites you to do so; and the [illegible] the Sanctifier, is ready to help you. Arise, there- [illegible] of good courage, for the Lord is with you. Did you [illegible] yourself to seek after God in vain, or set about [illegible] greater seriousness, watchfulness, and prayer, and find [illegible] antage by it? Or have you not always said, in the con- [illegible], that *it is good for me to draw near to God.* (Psalm [illegible] 28.) and condemned and hated yourself for your for- [illegible] slackness, and been ready to resolve, from your inmost [illegible], that you would *call upon the Lord as long as you live?* [illegible] lm cxvi. 2.

And let me put it to your conscience, do not you believe, that, if now you would gird up the loins of your mind, and quit yourself like a man, and be strong, that, *through Christ's strengthening of you, you may do all things?* And shall carelessness or stupidity; shall laziness and sloth; shall the allurements or the discouragements of the world or the devil, now, after all, hinder you? What! when you have been *redeemed, not with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of the Son of God;* when your prison-door is flung open, and your chains knocked off, and you called and invited to come out into *the glorious liberty of the children of God,* and when God is actually striving with you already, and stands ready to afford you further help, what, now be hindered! What, and be hindered by carelessness, unwatchfulness, &c.! What, shall the Saviour groan in the garden, and die on the cross, and yet you lie sleeping here! What, asleep! What, content without God in the world! What, when the whole army of prophets, apostles, and martyrs, have fasted and prayed all their days, and [illegible] through a sea of blood at last! Methinks you had bet-

tet abandon every mortal delight, *lay aside every weight and the sin that more easily besets you,* and mourn, and weep, and watch, and pray, and fight, and strive, as long as you live, than act so far beneath the dignity and character of a *christian.*

It is but a few in the world that truly know God, and the way of access to him, through Jesus Christ, and are in a (spiritual) capacity to live a life of devotedness to God, and communion with him: most men are *dead in sin. But you hath he quickened,* and *you are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works;* and it is God's design you should *walk in them:* you that were without Christ, and without God in the world, afar off, are *now brought nigh;* and you are no more *strangers and foreigners,* but *fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God:* for this cause I therefore beseech you, *walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called.* See this argument enlarged upon in the second, third, and fourth chapters of the epistles to the Ephesians, and your duties still more particularly delineated in the fifth and sixth.

2. Consider, *that as your case is circumstanced, it is absolutely impossible for you ever to find any other resting place but God, or ever take any satisfying comfort of your life, but in a way of devotedness to God and communion with him.* The case is not with you, O believer, as it is with other men. *You, only, have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities,* said God to his ancient people. *Mic.* iii. 2. But the other nations of the earth might worship idols, and serve wood and stone, and go on and prosper, without being called to a present account; and so it is as to particular persons. Bastards, who have no parents to own them and bring them up, may, as for any restraints from parental authority, do what they will. They that do not belong to God's family, may live from home as long as they please, and, because they have no interest in his house, may, in respect of divine permission, go and live where they please; may continue to lie out from God: but *whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth; and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.* Heb. xii. 6. Hypocrites may lose their reli-

gion, and lie dead whole months and years together, and return with the dog to his vomit, and take as much comfort in the world and their lusts as ever; but it is impossible that you should: you can never get your conscience asleep as other men's are, or your heart content to lie out from God, or wring yourself out of your father's hand, or get out of the reach of his rod.

Solomon once seemed resolved to find another resting-place for his heart besides God, and something else to take comfort in, and he was under the best outward advantages to make a thorough trial that ever man was; but he never did, and never could: but was always like a bone out of joint, or like the needle of a compass turned aside from its beloved star. *Vanity of vanities*, says the preacher, *all is vanity and vexation of spirit.* And poor David, how was he pained with anguish of spirit for the sin whereby he provoked the Lord? *Psalm* xxxii. 3, &c. *While I kept silence*, (i. e. before Nathan came who brought me to an open confession; see ver. 5.) *my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me. My moisture is turned into the drought of summer.* And never did a believer depart from God to seek another resting-place, or go away from the fountain of living waters to get something else to take comfort in; but God *hedged up his way with thorns, and made a wall, that he could not find his paths.* So that although he *followed after his lovers, he never overtook them*; and though he *sought them, he never found them*; but, at last, has been constrained to say, *I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now.* Hos. ii. 6, 7. His *backslidings have reproved him*, and *his wickedness has corrected him*, and *made him know*, to the breaking of his heart, *that it is an evil and bitter thing to forsake the Lord.* Jer. ii. 19. For as God *thus* dealt with the Jewish church of old, so he does with every believer; for all God's dealings with them *were for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.* 1 Cor x. 11.

And this now being the case, O believer, and you having always by your own experience found it so, will you, notwithstanding, forsake the Lord? What fault, *what iniquity do you*

find in God, that you should forsake him? Has he been a *wilderness unto you, or a land of darkness?* Or has he not been your father, ever since the day he took you by the hand to lead you, even ever since the day you first knew him? Or are you weary of lightsome, of sweet and happy days, and impatient to plunge yourself into darkness, distress, and anguish? May you not expect, if you forsake him and go away from him, to seek another resting-place, and something else to take comfort in as your portion, that he will *strip you naked as in the day that you was born*, and make you desolate, and a terror to yourself, and that his anger will smoke against you, and his hand lie heavy upon you? And then will you *mourn like the dove in the valley, and be troubled, and go bowed down greatly, and roar by reason of the disquietness of your heart*, and wish a thousand and thousand times that you had never forsaken the Lord. Read *Psalm* xxxviii. *Jer.* 2d and 3d *Chapters, Hos.* ii. Will you not, therefore, bid adieu to all other lords and lovers, and cleave unto the Lord with all your heart for ever? for this is your wisdom, and this is your life. Which brings me to add,

Consider, if you will have done with every thing else, and give up yourself to the Lord, to love him, and live to him, and be wholly his, *then God will be your God sensibly, and you will, in spiritual respects, be one of the happiest creatures in this world;* a hundred times happier than you could possibly be in the ways of sin; *you shall have an hundredfold in this present world, besides eternal life in the world to come. If any man love me,* says Christ, *and keep my commandments, I will love him and manifest myself unto him:* and *I and my father will come and make our abode with him.* John xiv. 21. 23. *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty:* Psalm xci. 1. And God will be your *dwelling-place for ever.* Psalm xc. 1. While the nations dash themselves in pieces, and all the world is in confusion, and while you pass through the fire and through the water, God will be with you; and he will always be your light, life, peace, joy, glory, and blessedness, in this undone, dreadful world; and your heart will be firm and fixed like *Mount Zion, that cannot be removed, but abideth for ever;* and nothing shall ever *separate you from the love of God, neither things present,*

nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor life, nor death, nor any other thing. And God will certainly give you every thing in this world that is best for you, and most for his glory, and you will not desire any more; and all the evil things you may pass through will sensibly work together for your good. *Mat.* vi. 33. *Rom.* viii. 28—39. *Psalm* lxxiii. 25, 26.

And thus you have, by experience, always found that God has dealt with you. I appeal, O believer, to your own conscience, that thus it has always been, whenever you have sensibly from the heart renounced all other things, and given up yourself to the Lord, to love him, and to live to him, and to take content in him, God has sensibly been a *God* and *father*, and *portion* unto you, and has given you all things, which (every thing considered) you could desire, and sensibly made all things work together for your good; whence you have been many a time ready to say, *That not a word of all his promises has ever fallen to the ground.* And you have actually enjoyed a hundred times more comfort in the service of God, in devotedness to God, and communion with him, than could have been had in the service of sin. And will you not now, therefore, be entirely and for ever the Lord's? O how happy you might be! And what blessed days you might enjoy!

4. And that which cannot but touch a filial heart, consider, that if you will thus be wholly the Lord's, to love him, and live to him, and delight in him, and to do his will, *God will be glorified thereby: it will be to his honour in the world;* John xv. 8. *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.* 1 Pet. ii. 9. God has but few friends in the world. Many that pretend to be his friends, are a great dishonour to him, and disgrace to religion. By their means his name is blasphemed, and his ways are evilly spoken of; and, in general, his honour is every where trodden down in the dust. And can you stand by unconcerned? yea, can you look on without your heart bleeding within you? O, therefore, be serious; be humble; be meek, holy, and heavenly; be peace-makers, and merciful; be kind and tender-hearted,

condescending and obliging, and abound in every good work; for you *are the salt of the earth*, and *the light of the world*. O, therefore, live so, *as that your Father which is in heaven may be glorified*. Mat. 5. 13—16.

To conclude, will you not now, therefore, determine from this day forward to be wholly the Lord's, and from this day begin to live to God in better earnest than ever? God is ready to help you. You will, as to present comfort, be undone, if you do not live to God; and peace, and glory, and blessedness is before you, if you do; and God, even your God, will be glorified. And if you are now ready, by the grace of God, to hearken unto this advice, then take these two directions:

1. *Lay aside every weight, and the sins which more easily beset you*. Heb. xii. 1. In a serious and sweet hour, when you get alone, and mourn, and pray, and give up yourself to God, and think and resolve you will now be for ever the Lord's, you are wont upon self-examination, and a review of past times, to see and say, "This, that, and the other thing, has been the sinful occasion, time after time, of my losing a serious, gracious frame of heart; and by such and such sinful means I have gradually lost a sense of divine and eternal things, and so have wandered from God, and laid a foundation for darkness and sorrow. O my carelessness! O that I had prayed more in secret! O that I had spent precious time better, &c. &c." These now are the weights, and these the sins which easily beset you: and these you must lay aside for ever, if you design to be the Lord's indeed, and to make a business of religion to purpose. But perhaps you will say, "My worldly business; my necessary cares, and the common duties of life, are sometimes the very things, and these I ought not to lay aside; and what shall I do in this case?" I *answer*, that, at another time, the necessary cares, business, and duties of life, you find to be no hinderances at all; even at such times when you do all out of love to God and for God, with singleness of heart. If you will, therefore, but always go about the common duties of life in such a manner, they will never be any clog to you. What you have, therefore, to do in the case, is not to lay aside that which is your duty, but to lay aside your

wrong ends and aims: and thus you must lay aside every weight. But,

2. If you design to be religious in good earnest, *then be careful to use all proper means, and do every proper thing that has a tendency to promote your spiritual life.* Every *proper* thing, I say, to guard against those anti-scriptural methods which enthusiasts are wont to take, and by which, above all things, their false affections are promoted, but which have a direct tendency to kill the divine life. In a serious hour of sweet retirement, and in happy days when you are nearest to God, and enjoy most communion with him, and have your senses most accurate to discern between good and evil, you are wont to see and say: "O how blessed I might be, if I did always keep in this narrow way which now lies open plain before me: if I were always serious, watchful, praverful; always reading, or meditating, and looking to God, and keeping my heart, and improving every precious moment of my time wisely for God," &c. Well, well, O believer, this is the way: walk in it, and you *shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season, whose leaf never withers; and whatsoever you do shall prosper.* And, after a few more days, and weeks, and months, and years spent in prayer, and faith, and holiness, in this your pilgrimage state, you shall come and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God, and dwell for ever with the Lord. Amen.

Now, the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ! to whom be glory for ever and ever. AMEN.

TRUE RELIGION DELINEATED.

DISCOURSE II.

SHOWING THE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL, AND OF A GENUINE COMPLIANCE WITH IT.

JOHN III. 16.

For GOD *so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

THE INTRODUCTION.

THE grand question before us, is, *What is true religion?* And this is the general answer: *It consists in a real conformity to the law, and in a genuine compliance with the gospel.*— What is implied in a real conformity to the *law,* has been already shown in the former discourse; and we come now to consider wherein a genuine compliance with the *gospel* does consist. From our Saviour's mouth, we had before a brief summary of the law; and now, from our Saviour's mouth, we have a brief summary of the gospel, in these comprehensive words, *God so loved the world,* &c.

Nicodemus came to him for instruction, believing him to be a teacher sent from God. Our Saviour begins immediately to inculcate upon him the necessity of *regeneration* and *faith.* We are sinners; are naturally *dead in sin;* and, therefore, must be *born again;* be recovered to the divine image in the temper of our minds, and so be made spiritually alive. We are guilty; we need pardoning mercy at the hands of the great Governor of the world; but he will grant it only through the *Mediator* he has appointed: in him, therefore, must we believe; on his merits and mediation must we depend. Nicodemus could hardly understand the doctrine of the *new birth;* and our Saviour intimates that the mysteries of our redemption, by the blood of Christ, were like to be still more

difficult to him. We can easily understand worldly things, for they are agreeable to the temper of our minds, and suit the taste and relish of our hearts; but we are blind to things spiritual and divine; are slow of heart to understand them, they not suiting the temper and relish of our hearts, and we being in a disposition to disrelish things of such a nature: therefore, our Saviour observes to Nicodemus, (ver. 19.) *This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, but men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.* We are in a state of rebellion; at enmity against God, and under his wrath; and yet ready, through our darkness, to flatter ourselves that all is well; and so are secure and at ease. Light is come into the world, discovering our disease and our remedy, but we love our disease, and loathe the remedy; and, therefore, hate the light, and will not come to it. And thus our Saviour teaches Nicodemus wherein true religion consists, and points out the aversion of mankind to it. Nor is there any thing that will discover our aversion so plainly as to set true religion in its own light; for when we see clearly what it is, we may perceive how we stand affected towards it; but otherwise we may be easily mistaken; may imagine that we love true religion, when, indeed, we only love the false image we have framed in our own fancy. *Regeneration* and *faith*, these two great essentials, wherein all religion radically consists, are the things our Saviour inculcates upon his new disciple. Christ loved to lay the foundation well. He was not fond of converts, unless their conversion was sound. And indeed, all our religion is good for nothing, if our nature be not renewed: and all our communion with God is but fancy, if we are strangers to Christ: for he is *the way, the truth, and the life, and no man comes to the Father but by him.* But to proceed to the words of the text, *God so loved the world*, &c.

God, i. e. God the Father, the first person in the ever-blessed trinity, who sustains the dignity and majesty of God-head, and is eminently *Lord of heaven and earth*, (Mat. xi. 25.) and prime agent in the works of creation and providence; in governing the world; in redeeming, sanctifying, and saving of sinners. *Rom.* xi. 36. That there are three persons in the God-head, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and

that these three are one God, the scriptures do abundantly teach. (*Mat.* xxviii. 19. 2 *Cor.* xiii. 13. 1 *John* v. 7.) And this doctrine we must believe, or we cannot understand the gospel. *How* they are *three*, and *how* they are *one*, is not revealed, nor is it necessary for us to know; but that there are three persons in the God-head, and yet but one God, we must believe; and what characters they sustain, and what parts they act in the affair of our salvation, we must understand. The gospel represents *God the Father* as sovereign Lord of heaven and earth: as righteous Governor of the world: as giving laws to his creatures: as revealing his wrath against all transgressions. He is represented as being injured and offended by our sins, and concerned to maintain the honour of his majesty: of his law and government, and sacred authority. He is represented as having designs of mercy towards a sinful, guilty, ruined world; and as contriving and proposing a method of recovery. He is represented as one seated on a throne of grace, reconcileable through Jesus Christ, and seeking to reconcile the world to himself by Christ, ordering pardon and peace to be proclaimed through a guilty world, to any and all who will return to him in the way prescribed. The gospel represents *God the Son* as being constituted Mediator by his Father, that, in and by him, he might open a way to accomplish his designs of mercy towards a guilty world, consistent with the honour of his majesty; of his holiness and justice; of his law and government. His Father appointed him to the office, and he freely undertook it. His Father sent him into this world to enter upon the difficult work, and he willingly came. *He was made flesh, and dwelt among us.* Here he lived, and here he died, in the capacity of a Mediator. He arose: he ascended into heaven, and sits now at his Father's right hand, God-Man Mediator, exalted to the highest honour; made Lord of all things, and Judge of the world. And now we are to have access to God by him, as our Mediator, High Priest, Intercessor, and Advocate, who has made complete atonement for sins in the days of his abasement, and has now sufficient interest in the court of heaven. The gospel represents *God the Holy Ghost* as being sent of the Father as prime agent, and by the Son as Mediator, in the character of an enlightener

and sanctifier, in order to bring sinners effectually to see and be sensible of their sin, guilt, and ruin: to believe the gospel: to trust in Christ, and to return home to God through him. And it is his office to dwell in believers: to teach and lead them: to sanctify, quicken, strengthen, and comfort them, and to keep them through faith unto salvation. The *Father* is God by nature, and God by office: The *Son* is God by nature, and Mediator by office. The *Spirit* is God by nature, and Sanctifier by office. The *Father*, as Governor, Law-giver, Judge, and Avenger, has all power in heaven and earth, in and of himself. *Mat.* xi. 25. The *Son*, as Mediator, derives all his authority from the Father. *Mat.* xi. 27. The *Holy Spirit* acts as being sent by them both: by the *Father*, as supreme Governor, dealing with a sinful, guilty world, through a Mediator; by the *Son* as Mediator, negociating a reconciliation between God and man. *John* xiv. 16. The *Father* maintains the honour of the God-head, and of his government, and displays his grace, while he ordains that sin shall be punished, the sinner humbled, and brought back to God, and into a subjection to his will, and in that way be pardoned, and finally saved. Sin is punished, in the *Son*, as Mediator, standing in the room of the guilty: and the sinner is humbled, brought back to God, and into a subjection to his will, by the *Holy Spirit*; and, in this way is pardoned and saved. And thus the *Son* and the *Spirit* honour the *Father*, as supreme Governor, and all join in the same design to discountenance sin, humble the sinner, and glorify grace. Thus far briefly of the doctrine of the trinity. Right apprehensions of God help us to understand the law, and right apprehensions of the trinity, will help us to understand the gospel Not how they are three persons, and yet but one God, the manner of which is not needful to be known; but the offices and characters they sustain, and the different parts they act in the great affair of saving sinners. *God* (says the text) *so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life:* i. e. God the Father the great Governor of the world, whom we had offended by sin.

So LOVED *the world;* i. e. with a love of benevolence.—Esteem us he could not; for we were worthless and vile. To

delight in us it was impossible; for we were altogether odious and abominable. But to have a good will towards us, or a will to do us good, this he might have, although we were sinful and guilty. Not, indeed, from any motive in us; for if we were viewed, and our temper and circumstances considered, there was not to be seen one motive to pity, no, not the least; but every motive to indignation and wrath. However, from motives within himself, he might will to do us good, notwithstanding our sin and guilt. The self-moving goodness of his nature did excite him, from the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, to design mercy towards a sinful, guilty, ruined world. *God so loved the world.*

The WORLD, i. e. all mankind; all the posterity of Adam. For what follows, is evidently true, of every individual; *That he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

So *loved*, i. e. so inconceivably, so unspeakably,

That he GAVE *his only begotten Son*, i. e. of his mere, pure goodness, constituted him to be a Mediator; appointed him to be a Redeemer and Saviour, to make atonement for sin, and purchase divine favours, and so to open a way for sinners to return to God with safety, and for God to show mercy to them with honour. *God so loved the world*, i. e. all the race of Adam, that he *gave* his only begotten Son, immediately upon the apostacy of mankind; for then was *this seed of the woman* promised, (*Gen.* iii. 15.) that all, being *by nature, children of wrath*, might be prevented by divine goodness. God saw *all* involved in sin, and guilt, and ruin, by Adam's first sin. And so he provided a Saviour for *all*: that *whosoever believes in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

Should not PERISH. He viewed all mankind as sinful and guilty, lost, undone, and perishing; i. e. exposed to the wrath of God, and curse of the law, to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever. And he gave his only begotten Son to be a Saviour;

That whosoever BELIEVETH *in him*, i. e. that ventures upon his atonement, his worth and merits, his mediation and in-

tercession, for divine acceptance; so as to be thence emboldened to return home to God, upon the invitation of the gospel. That all such should not perish, but

Have EVERLASTING LIFE, i. e. the everlasting in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit, as a sanctifier and comforter, to be a never-failing spring of a new, a spiritual, and divine life; everlasting union and communion with Christ, and the everlasting favour and enjoyment of God through him.

Thus we have, in these words, a brief view of the glorious *gospel* of the blessed God. And from them we may learn, (1.) That God, the great Governor of the world, considered mankind as being in a *perishing* condition, i. e. sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless, and undone (2.) That it was merely from *motives within himself*, that he has done what he has for their recovery out of this state. (3.) That he has constituted his *Son* a Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour, that through him sinners might be *saved*. (4.) That he has appointed *faith* in Christ, to be the condition of salvation.—Here, therefore, I will endeavour to show,

I. Upon what *grounds* it was, that God, the great Governor of the world, did consider mankind as being in a *perishing* condition, i. e. sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless, and undone.

II. What were the *motives* which excited him to do what he has done for their *recovery*.

III. What *necessity* there was of a *Mediator* and *Redeemer*, and how the way to life has been opened by him whom God has provided.

IV. What is the true nature of saving *faith* in him. And so, by the whole, to explain the nature of the gospel, and of a genuine compliance therewith. And in the last place,

V. Will consider the *promise* of everlasting life to those who believe.

SECTION I.

SHOWING THE REASONS WHY GOD DOES, IN THE GOSPEL, CONSIDER MANKIND AS BEING IN A PERISHING CONDITION.

I. I am to show *upon what grounds it was, that God, the great Governor of the world, did consider mankind as being in a* perishing *condition*, i. e. sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless and undone. That he did consider mankind as being in a perishing condition, is evident, because he gave his only begotten Son, that *they might not perish* who should believe in him. If we were not in a perishing condition, his giving his Son to save us from perdition, had been needless: and his pretending great love and kindness in doing so, had been to affront us; to make as if we were undone creatures, when we were not; and as if we were much beholden to him for his goodness, when we could have done well enough without it: and the more he pretends of his great love and kindness, the greater must the affront be. So that however we look upon ourselves, it is certain that God, who sees all things as being what they are, did actually look upon us as in a perishing, lost, undone condition. And if he considered us as being in such a condition, it must have been because he looked upon us as sinful, guilty, justly condemned, and altogether helpless; for otherwise we were not in a perishing condition. If we could have helped ourselves a little, we should not have needed one to save us, but only to help us to save ourselves: but our salvation, in scripture, is always attributed wholly to God; and God every where takes all the glory to himself, as though, in very deed, he had deserved it all; (*Eph.* i. 3—6. and ii. 1—9.) so that it is certain, God did look upon mankind as being in a perishing condition, sinful, guilty, justly condemned, and altogether helpless: and considering us in such a condition, he entered upon his designs of mercy and grace; and therefore he every where magnifies his love, and looks upon us as infinitely beholden to him, and under infinite obligations to ascribe to him all the glory and praise, even quite all: *That no flesh should glory in his pre-*

sence; but *he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.* 1 Cor. i. 29. 31.

It is of great importance, therefore, that we come to look upon ourselves as being in such a perishing condition too; for otherwise it is impossible we should ever be in a disposition thankfully to accept gospel-grace, as it is offered unto us. We shall rather be offended, as thinking the gospel casts reproach upon human nature, in supposing us to be in such a forlorn condition as to stand in a perishing need of having so much done for us; as the Jews of old scorned it, when Christ told them, *If they would become his disciples, they should know the truth, and the truth should make them free.* They took it as an affront, and were ready to say, "What! Just as if we "were in bondage! Indeed, no. We were never in bondage "to any man: we have Abraham to our father, and God is "our Father; but thou hast a devil." *John* viii. 31—48. They would not understand him; they were all in a rage: and so it is like to be with us, with regard to the methods which God has taken with us in the gospel, unless we look upon ourselves as he does; so wretched and miserable; so poor, blind, and naked; so helpless, lost, and undone. It is the want of this self-acquaintance, together with a fond notion of our being in a much better case than we are, that raises such a mighty cry against the doctrines of grace, through a proud, impenitent, guilty world.

And since God does thus look upon us to be in such a perishing condition, and upon this supposition enters on his designs of mercy and grace, here now, therefore, does the question recur, *Upon what grounds is it that he considers us as being in such a perishing condition?* Grounds he must have, and good grounds too, or he would never thus look upon us. If we may rightly understand what they are, perhaps we may come to look upon ourselves as he does; and then the grace of the gospel will begin to appear to us in the same light it does to him.—The grounds, then, are as follow:

1. God, the great Governor of the world, does, in the gospel, consider mankind *as being guilty of Adam's first sin,* and, on that account, to be in a perishing condition. *In Adam all died,* (1 Cor. xv. 22;) but *death is the wages of sin,* (Rom. vi.

23 :) therefore, in Adam all sinned; for *by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin: and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned*, i. e. sinned in Adam, (Rom. v. 12;) for (ver. 19.) *by one man's disobedience many were made sinners.* And accordingly, *by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation:* and hence all are *by nature children of wrath.* (Eph. ii. 3.)

OBJ. *But how can we be guilty of Adam's first sin? It was he committed it, and not we: and that without our consent, and a long time before we were born.*

ANS. Adam, by divine appointment, stood and acted as our public head. He stood a representative in the room of all his posterity; and, accordingly, acted not only for himself, but for them. His sustaining this character rendered him a type of Christ, the *second Adam,* who has laid down his life in the room and stead of sinners. And his being spoken of in scripture as a type of Christ, with respect to this character of a public head, proves that he did actually sustain such a character. (Rom. v. 14.) And, therefore, as by the obedience of *Christ,* many are made righteous; so, by the disobedience of Adam, many are made sinners, (ver. 19.) i. e. by the imputation of Christ's obedience, believers become legally righteous; righteous in the sight of God, by virtue of an established constitution; and so have the reward of eternal life. So, by the imputation of Adam's first sin, his posterity, by ordinary generation, became legally sinners; sinners in the sight of God, by virtue of an established constitution, and so are exposed to the punishment of eternal death, the proper wages of sin. Now, it is true, we did not PERSONALLY rise in rebellion against God in that first transgression, but he who did do it was *our* representative. We are members of the community he acted for, and God considers us as such; and, therefore, looks upon us as being legally guilty, and liable to be dealt with accordingly; and so, on this account, in a perishing condition. But, perhaps, some will still be ready to say, "And where is the justice of all this?" Methinks the following considerations, if we will be disinterestedly impartial, may set the matter in a satisfying light:

(1.) *That the original constitution made with Adam, as to himself personally considered, was holy, just, and good.*

(2.) *That if all his posterity had been put under the same constitution, one by one, from age to age, as they came into being, to act for themselves, it had also been holy, just, and good.*

(3.) *That it was, in the nature of the thing, in all respects, as well for our interests that Adam should be made our public head and representative, to act not only for himself, but for all his posterity, as that we should each stand and act for himself singly; and, in some respects, better.*

(4.) *That, in such a case, God, as supreme Lord and sovereign Governor of the whole world, had full power and rightful authority to constitute Adam our common head and public representative, to act in our behalf.* Let us, therefore, distinctly consider these particulars:

(1.) It is to be noted, *the original constitution made with Adam,* (Gen. ii. 17.) *as to himself personally considered, was holy, just, and good,* as will appear if we consider the circumstances he was under, antecedent to that constitution or covenant. For,

In the first place, antecedent to that covenant-transaction, he was under infinite obligations, from the reason and nature of things, to love God with all his heart, and obey him in every thing. From the infinite excellence and beauty of the divine nature, and from God's original, entire right to him, as his creature, and absolute authority over him, as his subject, did his infinite obligation so to do necessarily arise. It was fit; it was infinitely fit and right that he should look upon the infinitely glorious God, his Maker and Governor, as being what he was, and as having such a right to him, and authority over him, as he had, and that he should be *affected* and *act accordingly,* antecedent to the consideration of any covenant-transaction. And, no doubt, this was actually the case with him before that covenant was made; for he was created in *the image of God;* (Gen. i. 27.) and so his heart was full of a sense of his glory, and of admiring and adoring thoughts. He felt that he was not his own, but the Lord's; and he loved him, and was entirely devoted to him, in the temper of his mind, conscious of the infinite obligations he was under thereto. And further, it is certain that God was the sole Lord and owner of this lower world, and all things in it; and that

Adam had no right to any thing but by a divine grant. And it is certain it was fit that Adam should be put into a *state of trial*, and that God had authority to do it.

And now, since he was naturally under such infinite obligations to love and obey God, his Maker, God, the supreme Lord and sovereign Governor of all things; since he had no right to any of the trees of the garden, but by the free grant of God; and since it was fit he should be put into a state of trial, and God had authority to do it: since these things were so, it is evident that constitution was HOLY: *In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* God had a right to make such a law, for Adam was his, and all the trees in the garden were his, and he was, by nature, GOD, SUPREME LORD AND SOVEREIGN GOVERNOR of the whole world, and it was fitting he should act as such; and it was infinitely fit that Adam should have a sacred regard to his authority in all things, *because he was such*; and that his eternal welfare should lie at stake, and be suspended upon his good behaviour. And, no doubt, Adam viewed things thus, and was thoroughly sensible that God had a right to prohibit that tree upon pain of death, and that he was under infinite obligations to have a most sacred regard to his will in that matter. Thus that constitution was *holy*.

And if we consider, *in the next place*, that, as has been observed, Adam was under infinite obligations to love God, his Maker, with all his heart, and obey him in every thing, resulting from the very reason and nature of things, it will appear that the *threatening was just*; and no more than what he must have expected, had he fallen into any sin whatsoever, antecedent to any constitution at all. Adam, in a state of *pure nature*, i. e. *prior to any covenant-transaction*, was under infinite obligations to perfect love and perfect obedience; the least defect, therefore, must have been infinitely sinful; and so, by consequence, must have deserved an infinite punishment.—And it was meet that God, the Governor of the world, should punish sin according to its real desert: in the nature of things it was meet, antecedent to any express declaration of his design to do so; and Adam knew all this. He knew what obligations he was under to God, to love him with all his heart,

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t for God to inflict, for any transgression of the law
e. And it was against the law of nature for Adam to
t the forbidden fruit, when once God had said he should
ot. It was practically denying God's supremacy, casting off
his authority, and actually setting up his will against the
Lord's. If any sin, therefore, deserved an infinite punish-
ment, surely that did.

Remark. And here, by the way, from this view of the case, we may gain a certain knowledge of what God meant by *Thou shalt surely die*; or, as it is in the original, *In dying thou shalt die*; and may be certain how Adam understood it. He did not mean that Adam should be *annihilated*; for such a punishment was not equal to the crime. He might, without injustice, have *annihilated* Adam, had he remained innocent; for he that gives Being, of his mere good pleasure, may, of his mere good pleasure, take it away again: nor could Adam have brought God into debt by a thousand years' perfect obedience; for he owed himself, and all he could do, to God his Maker. *Rom.* xi. 35. God meant to punish Adam according to his deserts; but *annihilation* would not have been such a punishment: and therefore it is certain that this was not what God meant. Adam knew that sin was an infinite evil, and so deserved an infinite punishment, and that it was meet it should be punished according to its deserts, and that it was the nature of God to do so; but *annihilation* was not such a punishment, and Adam could not but know it: and therefore Adam could not understand *death* in this sense. God meant to punish Adam according to his deserts. And what did he deserve? Why, an infinite punishment; i. e. to

have all good taken away, and all kinds of evil come upon him *for ever.* Well, what good had Adam in possession? Why he had a *natural life,* resulting from the union of his soul and body, with all the delights and sweetnesses thereof; and he had a *spiritual life,* resulting from the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, and consisting of the image of God and sense of his love, with all the delights and sweetnesses thereof; and he was formed for immortality, and so was in a capacity of *eternal life* and blessedness, in glorifying God, and enjoying him. Here, therefore, he was capable of a *natural,* a *spiritual,* and an *eternal death;* to have soul and body rent asunder for ever; to be forsaken by the spirit of God, and given up to the power of sin and satan for ever, and to have God Almighty become his everlasting enemy. *All this* he deserved; and therefore God meant *all this.* All this he *knew* he should deserve; and therefore he could not but *understand* the threatening to comprehend all this. Besides, that which makes it still more certain, that this was the meaning of that first threatening, is, that God has since very expressly threatened *eternal death* as the wages of the least sin. *Rom.* i. 18. *Gal.* iii. 10. *Mat.* xxv. 46; (and the word DEATH itself is plainly used to signify *eternal death* and misery. *Rom.* vi. 23. *Rom.* viii. 13.) So that either *now* he means to punish sin more than it deserves, or he intended *then* to punish sin less than it deserved; or else *eternal death* was what he always meant, by threatening *death* as the wages of sin. If he means to punish sin *now* more than he did *then,* it is too much *now,* or not enough *then;* both which are equally contrary to the reason and nature of things, and equally inconsistent with the impartial justice of the divine nature, which always inclines him to render to every one according to his deserts; nor more nor less: and therefore *eternal death* was intended in that first threatening. But this by the way.

And *lastly,* as that constitution was holy and just, so also it was *good;* because it put Adam, (personally considered,) under better circumstances than he was before. For, while in a state of pure nature, perfect obedience could not have given him any title to eternal life; but, as was said before, God might have annihilated him at pleasure, after a hundred

knew all this beforehand; yet that altered not the nature of the thing at all; did not diminish his goodness, nor lessen his grace. And the Jewish nation, at this day, have reason to say, "The Lord's ways have been ways of goodness, and blessed be his name; but to us belong shame and confusion of face, for that we have sinned."

OBJ. *Yes, but God decreed that Adam should fall.*

ANS. He did not decree that Adam should fall, any more than he did that the seed of Abraham should turn out such a stiff-necked, rebellious race. He decreed to permit both to do as they did; but this neither lessens his goodness, nor their sin: for God is not obliged to put his creatures under such circumstances as that they shall never be tempted nor tried; and when they are tried, he is not obliged to keep them from falling; it is enough that they have sufficient power to stand, if they will; which was the case with Adam. Besides, God had wise ends in permitting Adam to fall; for he designed to take occasion therefrom, to display all his glorious perfections in the most illustrious manner. So that we may say of it, (and should, if we loved God above ourselves,) as Joseph does of his brethren's selling him: *Ye meant it for evil, but the Lord meant it for good.* So here, satan meant it for evil, but God meant it for good; even to bring much glory to his great name: therefore be still, and adore his holy sovereignty; and, at the same time, acknowledge that the constitution, in its own nature, was holy, just, and good; yea, very good. These things being considered, I proceed to add,

(4) *That, in such a case, God, as supreme Lord and sovereign Governor of the whole world, had full power and rightful authority to constitute Adam, our common head and public representative, to act in our behalf*; for, as the case stood, there could be no reasonable objection against it. Adam was not held up to hard terms. The threatening, in case of disobedience, was strictly just. The constitution, in its own nature, was vastly for the interest of Adam and of all his race. Adam was already constituted the *natural* head of all mankind; for *God blessed him, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.* Gen. i. 28. All his race, had they then existed, would, if they had been wise for themselves, readily

have consented to such a constitution, as being well adapted to the general good. (So men are wont to do when their estates lie at stake, or their lives; if they think that an *attorney* is likely to manage the case for them better than they can for themselves, they will choose him, and venture the case with him, rather than with themselves.) So that the only question is, whether God had, in so unexceptionable a case, full power and rightful authority to constitute Adam a public head, to stand as a *moral* representative for all his race, and act in their behalf, so that they should stand or fall with him. Or, in other words, (for it all comes to the same thing,) whether, in any case whatsoever, God has full power and rightful authority to appoint one to stand and act in the room of another, so as to lay a foundation for the conduct of the one to be so imputed to the other, as that both shall stand and fall together. And so it is as much of a question, whether God had power and authority to constitute the *second* Adam a public head as the *first*. If God had not full power and rightful authority to appoint the *first* Adam to be our public head and moral representative, to stand and act in our behalf, so as to lay a foundation for his conduct to be so imputed to us, as that we should stand and fall with him, *then* he had not full power and rightful authority to appoint the *second* Adam to be a public head, and moral representative, to stand and act in the room of a guilty world, so as to lay a foundation for his righteousness to be so imputed to them that believe in him, as that they should be justified and saved through it. For, if God has not power to constitute one to stand and act in the room of another, *in any case whatsoever;* and if, on this footing, we say he had not power to appoint the *first* Adam, it is plain that, on the same footing, he had no power to appoint the *second*. I suppose it will be readily granted, that if God has power, in any case whatsoever, to constitute one to stand and act in the room of another, in the manner aforesaid, then he had in these two instances of Adam and Christ, which are doubtless, on all accounts, in themselves, most unexceptionable. But if God, in no case whatsoever, has power to appoint one thus to stand and act in the room of another, then both these constitutions are effectually undermined, and rendered

null and void. We can neither be guilty of Adam's first sin, so as justly to be exposed to condemnation and ruin therefor; nor can the righteousness of Christ be so imputed to us, as to entitle us to justification and life. One man's disobedience cannot *constitute* many to be sinners, nor the obedience of one *constitute* many to be righteous. We can neither be ruined by the *first* Adam, nor redeemed by the *second*. Under the Jewish dispensation, it was ordained, (*Lev.* xvi.) that *Aaron should lay both his hands upon the head of the live-goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness. And,* (says God,) *the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities, unto a land not inhabited.* We used to think this *scape-goat* was designed by God to typify Christ. And the scripture has taught us, in express language, that *the iniquities of us all were laid on him;* that *he bore our sins;* that *he was made a curse for us;* that *by his obedience many are made righteous.* Isai. liii. 6. Pet. ii. 24. Gal. iii. 13. Rom. v. 19. But if God has not authority to constitute one to stand and act in the room of another, this must all be void and of none effect. And thus, while men are disputing against the original constitution with Adam, they, unawares, undermine this second constitution, which is the foundation of all our hopes. Eager to avoid Adam's first sin, whereby comes condemnation, they render of none effect Christ's righteousness, whereby comes justification. And if Christ did not stand and act as a public person; if our sins were not laid upon him; if he did not bare them on the tree; if he was not made a curse for us, and if we are not to be pardoned through his atonement, and justified through his righteousness, then the gospel is all a fable, and the whole scheme of our salvation, therein revealed, is wholly overthrown. What remains, therefore, but deism and infidelity? But inasmuch as we have full evidence to the truth of the Christian revelation, and may be assured that it is from God, we may, therefore, be confirmed in it that Jesus Christ has been, by God, the great Governor of the world, appointed a public person, to stand and act; *to obey* and suffer in our room, that, through his obedience

and sufferings, we might have pardon and eternal life. And, from this fact, we may be assured, that God has full power and rightful authority to constitute one to stand and act in the room of another: and, if he has such authority, nothing hinders but that he might constitute Adam to be our public head, as has been said.

Besides, if we consider the nature of the thing itself, it is plain that God had power to constitute Adam our public head; for God, as moral governor of the world, and sovereign Lord of all things, has power to make any constitution whatsoever, which does, in its own nature, agree to the eternal fitness of things, or, in other words, which is agreeable to his own perfections. But all will grant, that constitution is agreeable to his own perfections, which, in its own nature, is suited to the glory of God and good of the creatures. Now this constitution with Adam was, in its own nature, suited to the general good of mankind, because the welfare of mankind was, in the nature of the thing, safer and better secured upon such a footing, than if every single child of Adam had been left in a state of pure nature, without any constitution at all, or than if they had every one been put to act singly for himself; as has been before proved. And it was well suited to the glory of God, because in that constitution, considered in its own nature, God eminently appeared to be what he was. For in it he appeared as the MOST HIGH GOD; the SUPREME LORD, and SOVEREIGN GOVERNOR of the whole world; for in it he acted as *sovereign Lord* of his creatures, as being, by *nature, God,* and as having an *absolute right to* and *authority over* the works of his hands. And when God acts so, as by his conduct to show what he is, then are his doings suited to his own glory; for nothing is more to his glory, than to appear to be what he is. And inasmuch as the constitution itself was well suited to the general good of mankind, God did, in making of it, act a kind and tender part towards the human race, to the honour and glory of his goodness. And while eternal life was promised to perfect obedience, and eternal death threatened to disobedience, God's infinite love to virtue, and infinite hatred of vice, were manifested, to the glory of his holiness and justice. Since, then, that constitution was

suited to our good and God's glory, the sovereign Lord and Governor of all and rightful authority so to appoint: for, would act agreeably to his own perfections, fitness of things.

CONCLUDE. We may be abundantly satisfied, not the nature of the thing, but also from *what God has done*, that that constitution was holy, just, and good, that he had full power, and rightful authority to do as he because otherwise he would never have done so; he would never have made such a constitution. It is plain and evident, from *facts*, that Adam was considered and dealt with under the capacity of a public head, and that death *natural*, *spiritual*, and *eternal*, were included in the threatening; for all his posterity are evidently dealt with *just as if that had been the case*. They are born *spiritually dead*, as has been proved in the former discourse. They are evidently liable to *natural death*, as soon as they are born. And if they die and go into eternity with their native temper, they must necessarily be miserable in being what they are, unlike to God, and incapable of the enjoyment of him, and contrary to him. And God must necessarily look upon them with everlasting abhorrence; for he cannot but abhor creatures whose tempers are contrary to him: so that here is *eternal death*; and all in consequence of Adam's first sin.

Now then, if indeed we are, in *fact*, dealt with just as we should have been, had Adam been our public head, there can surely need no further evidence to prove that this was the case; for *the judge of all the earth cannot but do right*: and, therefore, he would not deal with us as being guilty of Adam's first sin, were not Adam our representative. But had Adam been our representative, and his first sin imputed to us, yet *then* we should have been dealt with no otherwise than *now* we are; i. e. on supposition of the interposition of a mediator, as is now the case: for that we are now born into the world subject to *natural death*, none can deny, and this by virtue of Adam's first sin; and if we are really *spiritually dead* too, and so exposed to *eternal death*, it is just what might have been expected, had Adam stood for us; and so there is no more to be said. And if God

be such a Being, as I suppose he is, and the law such, and the nature of true holiness such, then, as has been shown in the *first discourse*, there is no doubt we are, natively, *spiritually dead*. So that the force of this argument depends upon the truth of those *first principles*, which I think have been sufficiently proved. Right apprehensions of the *moral law* will, at once, convince us of our inherent natural corruption, and make us feel that we are *fallen* creatures.

REMARK. Perhaps this is the consideration which most commonly first leads poor sinners to see that they do actually lie under the guilt of Adam's first sin; and that their ruin thence took its rise, viz. their finding, by experience, when the spirit of God brings home the law, and awakens conscience, that they are, *by nature, dead in trespasses and sins*; for now no conclusion can be more natural than that they are, *by nature, children of wrath*. And this will naturally lead them to inquire, Whence this has come to pass? and they will presently find the scripture express and plain in it, that *by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners*; and *by the offence of one, judgment came upon all to condemnation*: and their own experience will give them the most natural comment upon the words, while they feel themselves to be, by nature, dead in sin, and exposed to eternal ruin. But now, "How could I justly have all this come upon me for Adam's first sin?" will naturally be the next thought. And an awakened conscience will perhaps first of all, reply, "How it is just and right I cannot tell, but I am certain so it is, that I am, by nature, dead in sin, and, by nature, a child of wrath; this I see and feel. And the scripture says, that, *by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners*; and that, *for the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation*. And God's ways must be righteous, for the Judge of all the earth always does right. And if I do finally perish, I have nothing to say; for I have gone in Adam's steps: I have been voluntary in my rebellion against God all my life, and am at heart an enemy to him still, and that voluntarily so." And this may in a measure, silence such a poor sinner for the present. But if ever he comes to be reconciled to the divine nature, and then impartially to look into the original constitution, he may then see that it was, in its own nature, holy,

just, and good, and worthy of God, the great Governor of the world; and, as such, sweetly acquiesce in it, saying, "God's ways were holy, just, and good, and blessed be his name; but to us, (to all the human race,) belong shame and confusion of face, for that we have sinned." But until men are awakened, at least to some sense of their natural corruption, they are commonly very blind and deaf to all the scripture says about this matter. It is hard to make men believe contrary to their own experience; to make them believe that they *fell* in Adam, when they do not feel that they are, by nature, *fallen* creatures. Let the scripture speak ever so plain, yet they cannot believe that it means as it says. It must mean, they think, something else. The best method, therefore, to convince sinners of the doctrine of original, (imputed,) sin, and to silence all their cavils, is to open the true meaning of the *moral law*, and show them their native depravity. This is the method which God takes in the Bible. He says but little about Adam's first sin, but says much to show us what we really are, as knowing that, if we are but once convinced of our native corruption, a few words are sufficient to show us whence our ruin originally took its rise.

Thus God, the great Governor of the world, in the gospel-dispensation, considered mankind as being in a perishing condition; sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless, and undone; and one ground and reason of his looking upon mankind to be in such a condition was, our original apostacy from him in our first parents. And since that constitution, whereby Adam was made our common head and public representative, was holy, just, and good, in its own nature; and since God, the supreme Lord of all things, had full power and rightful authority so to ordain and appoint; hence, therefore, he has sufficient reason to look upon mankind, on account of this first apostacy, as he does.

Therefore, at the same time he provided a Saviour for Adam, at the same time did he also provide a Saviour for his posterity too; they being considered as one with him, and involved in the same sin, and guilt, and ruin; and so standing in equal need of relief. Hence Christ is called *the lamb slain from the foundation of the world*. Then was it said,

that *the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.* To which original grant our Saviour seems to have respect, when he says, *God so loved the world, that he* GAVE *his only begotten Son,* &c. Whereas, had Adam acted in the capacity of a private person, and sinned and fallen for himself alone, and his posterity not been involved in the same ruin, he might have had a Saviour provided for him. But his posterity would no more have needed one than the angels in heaven, or than Adam before his fall.

OBJ. *But those words,* In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die, (Gen. ii. 17.) *were evidently spoken only to Adam; nor is there a word said about his posterity having any interest or concern in the affair.*

ANS. So also were those words, in Gen. iii. 19. *Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,* spoken only to Adam, without the least intimation that his posterity were any of them included in the sentence. And yet, by virtue of that sentence, all his posterity are subject to death. *Rom.* v. 12, 13, 14. Do you account for this, and you will, at the same time, account for that; for the truth is, that, in both cases, Adam was considered not merely as a single private person, but as a public head and representative, standing in the room of all his posterity: and, considered in this capacity, was he threatened with *death,* in case he sinned; and, considered in this capacity, was *natural death* denounced upon him after his fall. So that, in both, his posterity were equally included: and therefore St. Paul calls Adam a *type of Christ, Rom.* v. 14.; and calls *Christ* the *second* Adam, 1 *Cor.* xv. 45.; because both these, by the authority of the great Governor of the world, were constituted public persons, to act in the behalf of mankind: and all mankind were so included in them, that St. Paul speaks as if there had been but only these two men, Adam and Christ. 1 Cor. xv. 47. *The first man is of the earth, earthly; the second man is the Lord from heaven.*

2. God, the supreme Ruler of the world, does, in the gospel, consider mankind as being in a perishing condition; not only on the account of their original apostacy in Adam, their common head and representative, but also *because they are what they are in themselves.* (1.) Destitute of the divine image.

(2.) Contrary to God in the temper of their hearts. (3.) Utterly averse to a reconciliation. (4.) In a disposition, if unrestrained, to live in all open rebellion against the Majesty of heaven, before his face. (5.) And yet insensible of their just desert, and of their need of sovereign grace; and ready rather to think it a cruel thing, if God should damn them.

(1.) *God saw mankind destitute of his moral image*; for being conscious of the holy temper of his own heart; of the holy propensity of his own nature; and being conscious to the temper of their hearts; to the propensity of their nature, at first view he saw what they were. *God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good; no, not one.* Psalm liii. 2, 3. He saw mankind destitute of a conformity to his holy law. The law requires mankind to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively; and to love one another as their own souls; but he looked down from heaven; he beheld, and, lo, all the human race were entirely devoid of that temper. None were in a disposition to account him infinitely glorious in being what he was: not one had the least relish or taste for the beauty of his moral perfections: every heart was empty of holy love and of holy delight, and devoid of any true spirit or principle of obedience; and all mankind had lost that frame of spirit towards one another which they ought to have. The whole world lay in ruin. He knew his law was holy, just, and good, and that his creature, man, was under infinite obligations to a perfect conformity thereto. He saw what grounds there were for the law, and what reasons for their obedience. He saw his own infinite excellency, and his original, underived, entire right to them; and was conscious to his rightful authority over them. He judged them infinitely to blame for their nonconformity, and worthy of an infinite punishment. Speaking after the manner of men, he did, in the inward temper of his heart, perfectly approve of those words in *Gal.* iii. 10, as being strictly just. *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.* Therefore, he looked on mankind in a perishing condition. But,

(2.) *He viewed mankind not only destitute of good, but full of evil;* not only void of the true love to God and to one another, but enemies to God, and living in malice and envy among themselves. He looked down from heaven and viewed a guilty world, and saw their contrariety to his nature and to his law. Conscious of his own divine temper, he saw every contrary temper, in them. What he esteems, they despise; what he delights in, they loathe. The end which he prosecutes, they oppose; and they esteem and delight in that which is contrary to him, and prosecute ends and designs contrary to his. He saw their views, their tempers, their wills, their ends, designs, and ways, were all contrary to him, and diametrically opposite to his law. He considered them as his enemies, and their tempers as perfect enmity and contrariety to the divine nature. *Rom.* viii. 7.

(3.) And, inasmuch as he thus saw them entirely destitute of love to him, and diametrically contrary to the divine nature in the temper of their hearts, *he knew they would have no inclination to a reconciliation to God; but would be naturally averse to it.* He knew their aversion to a reconciliation would be as strong as their contrariety to the divine nature, from which it took its rise. He saw that if he should attempt to reclaim them, he should only meet with resistance; that if he should spread the news of pardon and peace through a guilty world, and invite them to return and be reconciled, that they would make light of it and despise it; that if he should send messengers after them, to persuade them to return, and beseech them to be reconciled, that they would put many of them to death. He saw just what treatment the prophets, and Christ, and his apostles were like to meet with. He knew not one in all the world would repent and convert, unless brought thereto by his own almighty arm, and all-conquering grace. *Mat.* xxi. 38—39. *Rom.* viii. 7. 1 *Cor.* iii. 6, 7.

(4.) *Yea, so far from a disposition to repent and convert, that, if left wholly to themselves, unrestrained, no wickedness would be too bad for them.* All would act as bad as Cain, Manasseth, or Judas; and the whole human race be like so many incarnate devils; they having the seed of all sin in their hearts. *Mark* vii. 21, 22.

(5.) And yet *insensible of their sin and guilt, and just desert, and that they lie merely at the sovereign mercy of God, and that he is at liberty to show mercy, or not, as seems good in his sight:* yea, so averse to the knowledge of this their true state, as to be disposed to hate the light, and shut their eyes against it, ready to resist all methods of conviction; yea, that some would be even so perverse, as actually to rise in arms against his messengers, who endeavoured to show them their ruin and the way of their recovery, and put them to death, as not fit to live; and yet so stupid as to think, that, in all, they did God good service. And that, in general, a great out-cry would be raised round a proud and guilty world, against the Lord, for supposing mankind to be in so bad, so very forlorn a state. God knew the pride of man, that he is exceedingly proud; and saw how great offence would be given to a guilty world, who would by no means endure to be so affronted. *John* iii. 19, 20. viii. 33. 47.

Now, such were the grounds upon which God looked upon the human race in a perishing condition; sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless, and undone. And considering that the original constitution with Adam, according to which he and all his posterity were doomed to destruction, in case he fell, was holy, just, and good; and considering that the law of nature, which all mankind are naturally under, and according to which the least sin exposes to eternal damnation, is also holy, just, and good; and considering our apostacy in Adam, and what we are in ourselves; I say, considering all these things, it is most certain and evident that the judgment of God was according to truth, while he esteemed mankind to be thus in a perishing condition.

That mankind are actually of such a nature, has been demonstrated in the *former discourse*. That God, whose understanding is infinite, and who sees all things as being what they really are, must therefore now see mankind to be such, is self-evident: and *such* as he *now* sees them to be, *such* he, from the beginning, *knew* they would be. It is evident, therefore, *à priori*, that God must have considered mankind to be *such*, when he first entered upon his designs of grace revealed in the gospel. And if we consider the nature of the gospel, and

what methods God has taken with a sinful, guilty world, to reclaim and recover them, and how they have behaved under all, it will be still more evident that mankind are verily in such a case. The law, the gospel, and experience, all join to confirm it.

Had not the gospel considered us as being entirely devoid of the divine image, destitute of any spiritual good thing, blind, dead, graceless, why should it so much urge the necessity of our being *born again*; made *new creatures*; having *our eyes opened*; being *raised from the dead*; being *created anew to good works*; and having *the law written in our hearts, the heart of stone taken away, and an heart of flesh given*? Had not the gospel considered us as being *enemies to God*, why should it invite us to be *reconciled*? Had not the gospel considered us as being very averse to a reconciliation, why should it pray and beseech us, with so much earnestness and solemnity, to be reconciled, and use so many arguments? Had not the gospel considered our reconciliation as unattainable by the most powerful arguments, of themselves, why should it declare that, after all, neither Paul, nor Apollos, nor Cephas, are any thing, or can do any thing, unless God himself give the increase? And were we not enemies to God, and rebels, and inveterate haters of the light, and disposed to rise in arms against it, why should Christ tell his ministers, *I send you forth as sheep among wolves; if they have called the master of the house* Beelzebub, *no wonder they call you so: you shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; they that kill you will think they do God good service*? That generation thought as well of themselves as the present generation now on earth does, and were ready to speak the same language, and say, *If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have killed the prophets*; but Christ knew their hearts. And, had not mankind, on these accounts, been considered as in a perishing condition, sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless, and undone, why was there provided *such a Redeemer*, and *such a Sanctifier*? And why was the salvation of sinners every where represented as being so *entirely* owing to the grace, the mere grace, the free, astonishing, wonderful grace of God, from first to last? Surely, from all this, most

certain and evident it is, that God does, in the gospel, upon these grounds, consider mankind as being in a perishing condition. And upon these grounds we must, therefore, come to consider ourselves so too, or we can never be in a disposition humbly and thankfully to accept the grace offered, and return home to God in the way provided. We shall rather be affronted, that the gospel supposes us to be in so bad a condition; or else never so much as take matters into serious consideration, but do as those invited to the marriage of the king's son, in Mat. xxii. 5. *They made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandize.* I do but just hint at these things now, because they have been so largely insisted upon heretofore. And thus we see upon what grounds it is, that the great Governor of the world does, in the gospel, consider mankind as being in a perishing condition.

SECTION II.

SHOWING WHENCE GOD'S DESIGN OF MERCY TOWARDS A PERISHING WORLD ORIGINALLY TOOK ITS RISE.

I proceed now,

II. To show *what were the motives which have excited God to do what he has done, for the recovery of sinners out of this their perishing condition.* And,

1. *It is not because the original constitution with Adam, our public head and representative, was too severe. It was not because it would have been hard and cruel, or in the least inconsistent with his infinite goodness and tender mercies, to have left all mankind in that state of total ruin they were brought into by the fall.* For had not that constitution been, in its own nature, holy, just, and good, and so most perfectly agreeable to his own nature; to his holiness, justice, and goodness, he would never have made it; for he necessarily infinitely abhors, in his public conduct, to act counter to the inward temper of his heart. For the very reason that he loves himself for being what he is, for the same reason he loves to act like himself, and infinitely abhors the contrary. And if that constitution was holy, just,

and good, in its own nature, originally, it must remain so still; for Adam's apostacy, together with all the dreadful consequences thereof, could not alter its nature. The constitution is perfectly as excellent as if Adam had never fallen: perfectly as good as if it had been the means of laying a foundation for the everlasting blessedness of all the human ace; for it is what it was. It was excellently well calculated for the glory of God, and the welfare of mankind, in its own nature; and therefore God made it, approved of it, was well pleased with it, nor can he ever alter his mind about it: for it is, in itself, just the same it was at first; and if it was holy, just, and good, in its own nature, and if it remains so still; if the holiness, justice, and goodness of his nature prompted him at first to make it, and then to approve of it, and be perfectly well pleased with it, it could not, (it is self-evident,) possibly have been, in the least, disagreeable to his holiness, justice, or goodness, to have dealt with all mankind, since the fall, according to it. So that, to a demonstration, God's thoughts of mercy towards a guilty, undone world, did not, in any measure, take its rise from any notion that mankind had been hardly dealt with, or that it would be any thing like cruelty and unmercifulness to damn the whole world for Adam's first sin, according to the tenour of the original constitution. Indeed, to suppose such a thing, highly reflects upon that constitution, and upon God for ever making it. It supposes the constitution was never really holy, just, and good in its own nature, and that God did wrong in making it. And the riches and glory of gospel-grace are wholly obscured; for God cannot be considered as a *sovereign benefactor*, showing undeserved mercy to a guilty, hell-deserving world; but rather as repenting for the injury he has done to mankind, and as endeavouring to make amends for it by a better, a juster, and kinder conduct for the time to come. And if this were the case, all his pretences, his high pretences to great love and goodness; to great kindness and grace, are hypocritical, and a mere mocking of us. He had abused and injured us, and is now but *repenting*, and *making restitution*; and ought, therefore, to have said so, and not pretended he did all from *mere grace*, which is to affront us, and make as if that constitution was holy, just, and good, and we righteous-

ly condemned, and justly miserable for ever. So that, let us view the case in what light we will, it is most evident and certain that the great Governor of the world considered mankind as being righteously condemned, and liable to everlasting destruction, consistent with the infinite goodness of his nature; nor did a thought of pity ever enter into his heart from the contrary supposition. Yea, it seems to have been his very design to maintain the honour of that constitution, while he shows mercy to a guilty world, inasmuch as he has appointed another public person, his own dear Son, to make atonement for our original apostacy, as well as our other sins, that hereby a way for his mercy might be opened. *Rom.* v. 18, 19.

2. Nor did God's designs of mercy towards a guilty, undone world, take their rise *from a supposition that the law of nature, which all mankind are naturally under, is too severe, in requiring perfect obedience, and threatening eternal damnation for the very least defect,* (Rom. i. 18. Gal. iii. 10.) *or from any supposition that it would have been any thing like cruelty or unmeetness, to have dealt with all mankind according to that rule.*

To explain myself, I may just observe, that the original constitution with Adam, as public head, (*Gen.* ii. 17.) was a *positive* appointment. After he was turned out of the garden, he ceased to sustain the character or capacity of a public person; nor are his posterity accountable for any but his first transgression. But the law of nature results from the nature of things; from God's being what he is in himself, and from our being what we are, and he our Creator, and we his creatures. And it was binding, in order of nature, antecedent to any positive constitution whatsoever: nor is its binding nature capable of any dissolution. We might have obtained life, according to the constitution made with Adam, had he kept covenant with God; and been confirmed in a state of holiness and happiness: so now we may obtain life by Jesus Christ, who has fulfilled the law of nature, and made atonement for all sin. But the law of nature still remains an unalterable rule of righteousness between God and his creature, man. We owe perfect obedience to God, and the least sin

deserves eternal damnation. And God might always have dealt with mankind simply according to this rule. The original constitution with Adam had some degree of GRACE in it. The constitution in the gospel is altogether GRACE. God might have held all mankind bound by the law of nature simply, nor ever have appointed any other way to happiness, than a perfect and persevering obedience; and mankind have been, to all eternity, in a peaceable state, liable to sin and fall into ruin. Whatsoever advantages mankind have had over and above this, are, and have been, of *mere grace*. According to the law of nature, we are under infinite obligations to perfect holiness in the temper of our hearts, and to perfect obedience in the whole course of our lives, and that not only for a day, or a year, or a thousand years, but so long as we continue in being. And so long as we are thus obedient, we shall be happy; but the least defect, at any time whatsoever, will let in everlasting, inevitable ruin upon us. Adam, in innocence, was under the law of nature, as well as under that particular positive constitution in *Gen.* ii. 17. So that any other sin, as well as eating the forbidden fruit, must have exposed him to ruin. But then, by that constitution, he had this peculiar advantage, that, if he persevered, his time of trial should shortly be at an end, and himself and all his race confirmed in a state of holiness and happiness; an advantage never to be obtained by any one merely under the law of nature. For, in the nature of things, it is impossible God should ever be laid under any obligations to his creatures, unless by virtue of his own free promise, which does not belong to the law of nature, but is an act of grace, which he may grant or withhold, as seems good in his sight. When Adam broke covenant with God, and when that positive constitution was at an end, yet still Adam remained, under the law of nature, bound to perfect obedience, to love God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself; yea, under infinite obligations; and every defect was infinitely sinful, and so was worthy of infinite punishment. And as was the case with him, so is the case with all his posterity. Our obligations are infinite, and so our non-performance infinitely faulty, and worthy of an infinite punishment. Though indeed as the case now stands, nor

Adam nor any of his race can ever obtain life by the law of nature; because we are sinners, and so, by the law of nature are condemned without hope. *Rom.* iii. 20. *By the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified; for by the law is the knowledge of sin.* And, chap iv. ver. 15. *The law worketh wrath.* And thus, as the case now stands, we are under infinite obligations to perfect obedience, and are liable to an infinite punishment for the least defect: and yet, through the bad temper of our hearts, we are unable to yield any obedience, and are in a disposition to be continually treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath.

Now, I say, the supreme King of heaven and earth was not moved to entertain designs of mercy towards a sinful, guilty, undone world, from a supposition that the law of nature was too severe, or that it would have been any thing like unmercifulness to have dealt with all mankind according to that rule. For,

All that this law requires, is, that since God is infinitely amiable in himself, and has such an entire right to us, and absolute authority over us as his creatures, we therefore ought to *love him with all our hearts*, and be entirely devoted to him, to do his will and keep his commands, seeking his glory; and that, since our neighbours are such as we; of the same species, and under the same general circumstances, we therefore ought to *love our neighbour as ourselves*; both which things are, in their own nature, right, and fit, and reasonable: so that the law is *holy*. And all that this law threatens, in case of any transgression, is, that since our obligations are infinite, and so the least defect infinitely wrong, therefore every such defect should be punished with the everlasting pains of hell; and that in exact proportion to the several aggravations attending each transgression; which is also, in its own nature, right, and fit, and reasonable: so that the law is *just*. And that perfect holiness which this law requires, i. e. to love God with all our hearts, and our neighbours as ourselves, is the highest perfection our nature is capable of, and altogether suited to make us happy: so that the law is *good*. But,

It is not severe, nor any thing like unmercifulness, to deal with mankind according to a rule, which is, in its own nature,

holy, just, and good; but rather, it must have been agreeable to the holiness, justice, and goodness of the great Governor of the world so to do. And indeed, were not this the case, it would have been fit this law should have been repealed. Mankind did not need to be redeemed from the curse of an unrighteous law; for such a law ought to be laid aside, and its curses never executed. God would have been bound in justice to have abolished an unrighteous law. There is no need of Christ or gospel-grace in the case: and so all the high commendations of the grace of God in providing a Saviour, as being rich, free, and wonderful, are groundless, and cast much reproach upon mankind, as being a guilty race, righteously condemned, when, in truth, it is no such thing. God ought to have owned that the law was wrong, and to have repealed it; and not to have proceeded as if it was very good, and mankind altogether to blame, and worthy of eternal damnation And mightily would this have pleased an apostate, proud, and guilty world; and at the same time cast infinite reproach upon God and his holy law, and shut out all the grace of the gospel.

God has therefore, in the gospel, not only supposed the law to be holy, just, and good, and mankind righteously condemned; but has taken all possible care to make it evident that he does so, and thereby to secure the honour of his law, discountenance sin, humble the sinner, and exalt and magnify his grace. Even the whole scheme of the gospel is wisely calculated to attain these ends, as we shall see hereafter. So far was God from being moved to pity mankind, from a supposition that they had, in this respect, been too severely dealt with, and so objects of pity in that sense, that, on the contrary, he most perfectly approved of the law, as holy, just, and good; and was altogether in it, that mankind deserved to be proceeded with according to it. Yea, so highly did he approve of his holy law, and so odious and ill-deserving did mankind appear in his eyes for breaking it, that their sin cried aloud for vengeance in his ears; yea, cried so loud for vengeance, that he judged it necessary that his own Son should appear in their stead and die in their room, to the end that he might be just; might act consistently with the holiness and

justice of his nature, while he showed mercy to them, *Rom.* iii. 9. 26. In such a light he viewed things; in such a light must we therefore view them too, or we can never truly understand our need of Christ and gospel-grace, or cordially acquiesce in the gospel-way of salvation; but rather shall be disposed to quarrel with the strictness of the law, and think ourselves abused, and imagine that God deals hardly with us.

3. Nor was the supreme Being moved to entertain designs of mercy towards mankind, *from a supposition that their inability to yield perfect obedience made them the less to blame, and so the more proper objects of pity on that account.* For mankind are not the less to blame for their inability; but the more unable they are, the greater is their blame; and so the more proper objects are they of the divine wrath and vengeance.

God is a most excellent and aimable Being. He infinitely deserves our highest love and esteem, and supreme delight. It is perfectly fit we should be of a disposition to say, *Whom have we in heaven but thee? and there is nothing on earth we desire besides thee.* Psalm lxxiii. 25. Now, not to love this God with all our hearts, must be infinitely wrong; and not to love him at all, must be worse still: but to be habitually contrary to him in the temper of our hearts; yea, so averse to him as that we CANNOT love him, must be, in the very highest degree, vile and sinful. And now to say we CANNOT, by way of *extenuation,* as though we were the less to blame for that, is intolerably God-provoking; since our CANNOT arises only from the bad temper of our hearts, and because we are not what we should be; and not at all from any unloveliness in the divine nature, or from our want of external advantages for the knowledge of God.

Put the case to thyself, O man. Were you as wise as Solomon, as holy as David, as humble as Paul, and of as loving and kind a temper as John; and had you a family of children; and were all the rules and orders of your house like yourself, and calculated to make all your children just such as you are; and did you perceive that your children neither liked you nor your ways, nor the orders of your house; they show much disrespect in their carriage, disregard your authori-

ty, complain your rules are too strict, and daily break over all orders; at length you call them to an account; are about to convince, humble, and reform them; they plead they are not to blame, at least not *so much* to blame, because they CANNOT love you, they CANNOT like your ways, they CANNOT but abhor such rules and orders; those very properties, on account of which you are indeed the most excellent man in the world, these are the very things for which they dislike you, while, in the mean time, they can most heartily love their companions in vice and debauchery. And now the question is, whether their inability to love you renders them any the less to blame: or, whether it be not very provoking in them, to plead in excuse for themselves, that they *cannot* love you; when their *cannot* arises from their voluntary contrariety to all good, and love to debauchery; and not at all from any unloveliness of your person or ways; or for want of advantages to be acquainted with you, and with the beauty of your temper and conduct. The application is easy. Was it any excuse for the ill-will of the malicious *Pharisees* towards Christ, that they *could not* love him; that they *could not* but hate him? Did ever any man look upon a malicious, spiteful neighbour, and think him any the less to blame, for his abundant ill-carriage; for his being so exceedingly ill-natured that it was not in his heart to do otherwise? I appeal to the common sense of all mankind.

If such an inability can excuse mankind, then the devils, upon the same footing, may be excused too. And the more any of God's subjects hate him, the less will they be to blame; for the more any do really hate God, the less able will they be to love him; the more averse to his law, the less able to keep it. And, therefore, since our inability arises from such a root, the more unable we are to love God with all our hearts, and yield a perfect obedience to all his laws, the more vile, guilty, hell-deserving we are, and the more unworthy of pity. So that our moral inability and impotency, or rather *obstinacy*, was, in the nature of things, so far from extenuating our guilt and moving the divine pity, that it was the strongest evidence of our exceeding vileness, and, as it were, a mighty bar and great discouragement in the way of God's ever entertaining any designs of mercy towards us. It was like the

great mountains; so that nothing but infinite goodness could have ever surmounted it. And in this light must we view ourselves and our inability, and become self-condemned before God, or we shall never like it that God looks upon us as he does, nor ever be able to look upon his grace in the gospel in the same light with him, nor can we ever heartily approve of and fall in with that way of salvation.

When we are under sufficient outward advantages to come to know what kind of Being God is, and yet after all, see no beauty in him, nor esteem him, it must be either because we are intolerably bad in our temper, or else because he is not truly, and, indeed, a lovely and amiable Being. When we say we *cannot* love him, under a fond notion that we are hereby excused and are not to blame, we implicitly say, that we are well enough disposed, and are of a good temper, but God is such an hateful Being that we *cannot* love him; there is nothing in him to be loved. So that to say we CANNOT, under a notion of extenuating our guilt, casts the highest reflection upon God imaginable, and indeed is big with the blackest blasphemy. We had as good say, "It is not owing to us that we do not love God, but to him. We would readily love him, if there was any thing in him for us to love; but there is not, and so we *cannot*; and therefore are not to blame."

To suppose, therefore, that God, in the gospel, considers us as being the less to blame for this our inability, and from thence is moved to pity us, is the very same thing in effect as to suppose that God owns himself a hateful, unlovely Being, and thinks it a great hardship that his poor creatures should be forced to love him, or be damned; and therefore repents that ever he was so severe, or ever made such a law, and is sorry for them, and will do better by them for time to come. But how horrid a thought is this! It casts the highest reflection upon God, and upon his holy law, and quite destroys all the grace of the gospel. No, no! God knew well enough how the case stood. He was conscious to his own infinite excellency, and to the infinite reasonableness of his law. He knew the hellish temper of an apostate, rebellious race; and verily he was GOD, and not *man*, or he would have doomed

the whole world to destruction without any pity, or so much as one thought of mercy. *Herein was love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins.* 1 John iv. 10. *While we were sinners and enemies,* (Rom. v. 8. 10.) and most strongly averse to a reconciliation. 2 *Cor.* v. 20.

4. Nor did his designs of mercy take their rise *from any expectation that a rebellious, guilty, perishing world, would be so good as, of their accord, ever heartily to thank him for it.*—No, he knew well enough how it would be; that many would make light of it, and go their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandize; and that others would be affronted, and some so very angry that they would take his messengers, and stone one, and beat another, and kill another, and finally would crucify his Son. And he expected that mankind in general would be disposed to hate his law, and pervert his gospel, and resist his spirit; and never one, in all the world, repent and convert, and come and humble himself before him, and bless his holy name, unless brought thereto by his own all-conquering grace. *Mat.* xxi. 33—39. and xxii. 1—7. *Luke* xiv. 16—23. 1 *Cor.* iii. 6, 7.

So that, from the whole, it is very plain God was not moved to entertain thoughts of mercy towards mankind, neither under a notion that they had been, in any respect, hardly dealt with; nor under a notion that their impotency rendered them in any measure excusable; nor under a notion that there was any good in them, or to be expected from them; but, on the contrary, he looked upon the original constitution with Adam to be holy, just, and good; and that, upon that footing, all mankind deserved all ruin; and he looked upon the law of nature also holy, just, and good; and that, upon that footing, a wicked world deserved his everlasting wrath; and he looked upon them altogether criminal for their impotency: in a word, he looked upon them voluntary in their rebellion, and obstinate in their enmity, and infinitely unworthy of the least pity; yea, so unworthy of pity, that, to secure his own honour, and to save himself from just reproach, while he pitied them, and showed them mercy, he thought it needful that his own Son should become a Mediator, and bear their sin and suffer for

their guilt, and so open a way for the honourable exercise of his mercy.

To conclude, therefore,

1. It is evident that his designs of mercy took their rise merely, absolutely, and entirely from himself: from his own infinite benevolence: from his self-moving goodness and sovereign grace. God so loved the world:

As for us, we lay in the open field of perdition, polluted, perishing in our blood and guilt; and it was perfectly right that the righteous sentence of the law should be executed upon us: and God had been for ever glorious in the everlasting ruin of a rebellious world. There was nothing in our circumstances, all things considered, of the nature of a *motive to pity:* we were too bad to deserve any pity or relief; yea, so bad, that the great Governor of the world could not, without counteracting all good rules of government, show any mercy but by the interposition of his own Son, to stand and die in our room and stead. So that, instead of any motive to pity, there was every thing to the contrary. Our infinite ill-desert lay as an infinite bar in the way. Here, now, was an opportunity for infinite goodness and self-moving mercy to exert itself in the most illustrious manner, in designing mercy; in providing a Mediator, and in opening a door for the exercise of much grace to mankind in general, and of special saving mercy in ten thousand thousand instances. There was nothing, *ab extra*, from without God himself, to move and put him on to such a wonderful and glorious enterprise. The motion was wholly from himself: from his self-moving goodness; from his good pleasure, according to the counsel of his own will. *Eph.* i. 3—12. No wonder, therefore, the gospel every where celebrates the love and goodness, mercy and grace of God, as being rich and free, unparalleled, unspeakable, inconceivable, infinitely great and glorious, as discovered in this most wonderful of all God's works. And to suppose that God was under any obligations to show these favours, would be to undermine and overthrow the whole gospel, and turn a deed of the *freest* and *greatest grace* into a work of *mere justice*. Thus we see whence God's thoughts of mercy, towards a sinful, guilty world, had

He had in view a great variety of glorious designs, all infinitely wise: all suited to display the glorious perfections of his nature, and bring everlasting honours to his great name. He designed to destroy the works of the devil. *Gen.* iii. 15. 1 *John* iii. 8. Satan had induced mankind to their rebellion; and had, perhaps, in his conceit too, made himself strong against the Almighty. He first rebelled himself, and now he had brought others to join with him, and in this world he intended to rule and reign; and, by the whole, bring much reproach upon the rightful Lord of heaven and earth. God wrought therefore, for his great name's sake, that it might not be polluted; and entered upon methods to defeat his designs, and bring his kingdom to naught, and crush the rebellion, and put him to open shame; and at length bind him up in his chains, that he should deceive the nations of the earth no more; and give all nations, languages and tongues, to Jesus Christ, and bring the whole world into subjection to him. *Rev.* xx. 1—4. He designed to display his glorious grace, in bringing millions of this seduced, apostate race from the jaws of eternal destruction to eternal glory. *Rom.* ix. 23. *Eph.* ii. 7. He designed to put all mankind in a new state of probation, and to display his glorious goodness, patience, forbearance, and long-suffering, in his dealings with the obstinate and finally impenitent in this world, and his glorious holiness and justice in their everlasting punishment in the world to come, in the same lake of fire and brimstone which was prepared for the devil and his angels, with whom they had joined in their rebellion against the Majesty of heaven. *Acts* xiv. 17. *Rom.* ii. 4. xix. 22. *Mat.* xxv. 41. In a word, he designed to take occasion, from the apostacy of mankind, in the innumerable instances in this world, and throughout eternal ages in the world to come, to display all his glorious perfections: and so, by his whole conduct, to exhibit a most perfect and exact image of himself.

Thus we see that his designs of mercy towards a rebellious, guilty, undone world, took their rise, not from any motives in us, but altogether from the motives in himself; from the infinite, boundless goodness of his nature, and his sovereign good pleasure. And in this light must we view the grace of the

gospel; and all our encouragements to hope in his mercy, through Jesus Christ, must take their rise, not from any thing in ourselves, but only from that self-moving goodness and free grace which he has manifested through Jesus Christ. *Rom.* iii. 19, 20. 24. *Eph.* ii. 8.

And thus we see that his end, as to the elect, was to bring them back from their apostacy, their rebellion, and wickedness, and ruin, to God, their rightful Lord and sovereign, to become his servants, to love him, and live to him, and live upon him, and be blessed in him for ever. And in this light must we view the gospel; and with this its design must we heartily fall in. And being encouraged by the grace of the gospel to hope for acceptance in the sight of God, through Jesus Christ, we must, through Christ, give up ourselves to God, to be his servants for ever. *Luke* i. 74, 75. 2 *Cor.* v. 20. *Rom.* xii. 1. *Tit.* ii. 11—14.

From what has been said, it will be very natural to make these following *remarks*:

Rem. 1. If all God has done in the gospel, for our recovery from ruin, be of mere free grace, then it is self-evident *that God was under no obligations to a fallen, sinful, guilty, rebellious world; but, as for us, might have, consistent with all his perfections, left us in ruin, to inherit the fruit of our doings, and the punishment of our sin.* He was under no obligation to provide a Redeemer, or a Sanctifier; to give the least hint of a pardon, or take any methods to recover us from the power of sin. He was under no obligations to deal any better by us than would, in the whole, be no worse than damnation. By the constitution with Adam, and by the law of nature, this would have been our proper due. Every thing, therefore, whereby our circumstances have been rendered better than the circumstances of the damned, God was under no obligations unto; but all, over and above that, has been of free and sovereign grace. God was at liberty, as to us, not to have done any of these things for us. Yea, there were on our part *mighty hinderances* to prevent the mercy of God, and to put a *bar* in the way of the free and honourable exercise of his grace: even such hinderances, that nothing could remove [illegible] but the blood of Christ. Hence,

REM. 2. *Mankind were, by their fall, brought into a state of being infinitely worse than not to be.* The damned in hell, no doubt, are in such a state, else their punishment would not be infinite; as justice requires it should be. But mankind, by the fall, were brought into a state, for substance *, as bad as that which the damned are in. For the damned undergo nothing in hell, but what, by the constitution with Adam, and the law of nature, all mankind were, and would have been, for substance, exposed unto, if mere grace had not prevented. And, according to what was but now observed, God was under no more obligation to grant any relief to mankind, in this their fallen, sinful, guilty, undone condition, than he is now to the damned in hell; i. e. under no obligations at all: but the way for mercy to come to them was mightily barred and blocked up, by the infinite reasonableness of their being punished, and their infinite unworthiness, in the very nature of things, as the case then stood, of ever being pitied. So that mankind were, by the fall, brought into a state of being, (in scripture called *condemnation* and *wrath, Rom.* v. 18. *Eph.* ii. 3.) for substance, as bad as that which the damned are in; so that, if the damned are in a state of being infinitely worse than not to be, as no doubt they are, then so also were mankind. And mankind being actually brought into such a state by the fall, is what renders the grace of the gospel so inconceivable, so unspeakable in its greatness, and so absolutely free. To deny that mankind, by the fall, were brought into such a state, is the same thing, in effect, as to deny original sin, and undermine the glorious grace of the gospel.

OBJ. *But how could God, consistent with his perfections, put us into a state of being worse than not to be? Or how can we ever thank God for such a being?*

ANS. Our being brought into so bad a state was not owing to God, i e. to any fault in him, but merely to ourselves; to our apostacy from God. It was our apostacy from God that

* *For substance,* I say, because it must be remembered that the superadded punishment inflicted upon any in hell, for despising the gospel, must be left out of the account. For all this is over and above what, by the constitution with Adam, and the law of nature, mankind were or ever would have been exposed unto.

brought all this upon us, in way of righteous judgment. *Rom.* v. 18, 19. Our being in so bad a state is no more owing to God, than their's is who are now in hell. They deserve to be in hell, according to a law that is holy, just, and good; and we deserve to be in such a state, according to the constitution made with Adam, which was also holy, just, and good: and therefore the one may be consistent with the divine perfections, as well as the other. It cannot be disagreeable to the holiness, justice, and goodness of the divine nature, to deal with mankind according to a constitution, in its own nature holy, just, and good.

Now inasmuch as God did virtually give *being* to all mankind, when he *blessed* our first parents, and said, *Be fruitful, and multiply*; and inasmuch as *being*, under the circumstances that man was then put in by God, was very desirable; we ought, therefore, to thank God for our *being*, considered in this light, and justify God in all the evil that is come upon us for our apostacy; for the Lord is righteous, and we are a guilty race.

Those in hell are in a state of being infinitely worse than not to be; and, instead of thanking God for their beings, they blaspheme his name: but still there is no just ground for their conduct. They have no reason to think hard of God for damning them; they have no reason to blame him; they have no reason to esteem him any the less for it: he does what is fit to be done. His conduct is amiable; and he is worthy of being esteemed for doing as he does; and all holy beings will always esteem him for it. *Rev.* xix. 1—5. Therefore the damned ought to ascribe all their evil to themselves, and justify God, and say, "He gave us being; and it was a mercy; and he deserves thanks; but to us it is owing that we are now in a state infinitely worse than not to be. God is not to blame for that; nor is he the less worthy of thanks for giving us being, and for all past advantages which we ever enjoyed: for the law is holy, just, and good, by and according to which we suffer all these things." So here: mankind, by the fall, were brought into a state of being infinitely worse than not to be: and were they but so far awake as to be sensible of it, they would no doubt, all over the earth, murmur,

and blaspheme the God of heaven. But what then? There would be no just ground for such conduct. We have no reason to think hard of God; to blame him, or to esteem him any the less. What he has done was fit and right; his conduct was beautiful: and he is worthy to be esteemed for it: for that constitution was holy, just, and good, as has been proved. And therefore a fallen world ought to ascribe to themselves all their evil, and to justify God and say, "God gave us being under a constitution holy, just, and good; and it was a mercy. We should have accounted it a great mercy, in case Adam had never fallen; but God was not to blame for this; nor therefore is he the less worthy of thanks. All that we suffer is by and according to a constitution in its own nature holy, just, and good." Thus mankind ought to have said, had God never provided a Saviour, but left all the world in ruin; and thus ought they to have justified God's conduct; laid all the blame to themselves, and acknowledged that God deserved praise from all his works; which, as they came out of his hands, *were all very good.* Gen. i. 31.

OBJ. *But although we were by the fall, brought into such a state of wrath and condemnation, yet now we are delivered out of it by Christ;* for as, in *Adam,* all die, so, in CHRIST, shall all be made alive.

ANS. Before men believe in Christ, they are as justly exposed to divine vengeance, as if Christ had never died. *John* iii. 18. 36. And there is nothing to keep off vengeance, one moment, but sovereign mercy; which yet they continually affront and provoke. *Rom* ii. 4, 5. And they are so far from an inclination to turn to God of their own accord, that they are disposed to resist all the means used to reclaim them. *John* iii. 19. It is true, God is ready, through Christ, to receive returning sinners, and invites all to return through him. Thus God is good and kind to an apostate world, and offers us mercy. God is not to blame that we are in so bad a case: our destruction is of ourselves, and the Lord is righteous: but still it is evident we are in a perishing condition, and shall certainly perish, notwithstanding all that we, of our own mere motion, ever shall do. If sovereign grace does not prevent, there is no hope.

OBJ. *But if mankind are thus, by nature, children of wrath in a state of being worse than not to be, and, even after all that Christ has done, are in themselves thus utterly undone, how can men have a heart to propagate their kind, or account it a blessing to have a numerous posterity?*

ANS. It is manifest by their conduct; by their neglecting their children's souls, and caring only for their bodies, that parents, in general, do not propagate with any concern about the spiritual and eternal well-being of their posterity. It is probable, in general, they are influenced by the same motive that the brutal world are, together with a desire to have children under the notion of a worldly comfort, without scarcely a thought of what will become of their posterity for eternity.

As to *godly* parents, they have such a spirit of love to God, and resignation to his will, and such an approbation of his dispensations towards mankind, and such a liking to his whole scheme of government, that they are content that God should govern the world as he does; and that he should have subjects to govern; and that themselves and their posterity should be under him, and at his disposal. Nor are they without hopes of mercy for their children, from sovereign grace through Christ, while they do, through him, devote and give them up to God, and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. And thus they quiet themselves as to their souls. And now, considering children merely as to this life, it is certain that it is a great comfort and blessing to parents to have a promising offspring.

As to *carnal* men, since they are enemies to God and his holy law, it is no wonder they are at enmity against his whole scheme of conduct as Governor of the world. Did they understand how God governs the world, and firmly believe it, I doubt not it would make all their native enmity ferment to perfection. They would wish themselves to be from under God's government, and hate that he should ever have any thing of their's to govern. As soon as ever they enter into the eternal world, and see how things really are, this will, no doubt, actually be their case. In a word, if men heartily like the original constitution with Adam, as being, in its own nature, holy, just, and good, this objection will, upon mature

consideration, be no difficulty with them; and if they do not, it is not any thing that can be said, will satisfy them. But wicked men's not liking the constitution, does not prove it to be bad.

OBJ. *It cannot be thought a blessing to have children, if the most of them are likely, , nally to perish.*

ANS. The most of Abraham's posterity, no doubt, for above these three thousand years, have been wicked, and have perished; and God knew before-hand how it would be; and yet he promised such a numerous posterity under the notion of a great blessing. *Gen.* xxii. For, considering children merely as to this life, they may be a great blessing and comfort to parents, and an honour to them; but it is very fitting our children should be God's subjects, and under his government. Nor are they any the less blessings to us, as to this life, because they must be accountable to God in the life to come. They may be a great comfort to us in this life; and we are certain God will do them no wrong in the life to come. All men's murmuring thoughts about this matter arise from their not liking God's way of governing the world.

REM. 3. *Then do we begin to make a just estimate of the grace, the free, rich, and glorious grace of God, the great Governor of the world, displayed in the gospel, when we consider mankind, by and according to a constitution and a law, both of them holy, just, and good, actually in such a ruined state.* Now we may begin a little more to see the natural import of those words, *God so loved the world:* such a world was it, that he loved and pitied: a world in so bad a state: a perishing world, sinful, guilty, justly condemned, altogether helpless and undone. And to have a door opened by the blood of Christ, for us to be raised from the depth of such ruin, is wonderful grace indeed. And in this light does the matter stand in scripture-account: for, according to that, *by the offence of one, judgment came upon all to condemnation; and, by the disobedience of one, many were made,* (or constituted,) *sinners,* by virtue of the original constitution with Adam*. *Rom.* v. 18, 19.

* *Constituted sinners,* it is in the original; for it was by virtue of that primitive *constitution* with Adam, that his first sin laid all his posterity under sin, guilt, and ruin.

rld stood guilty before God, by virtue of their
an mity unto and transgression of the law of na-
ral law. *Rom.* iii. 9. 19. And hence mankind
nsidered as being under *sin,* and under the *curse of the*
and under the *wrath of God.* Rom. iii. 9. Gal. iii. 10.
n iii. 16. Rom. i. 18. And under this notion Christ was
ppointed, to *save his people, from their sins,* (Mat. i. 21.) to *de-*
liver them from the wrath to come, (1 Thes. i. 10.) and to bring
pass, that whereas, *by the disobedience of one, many were*
e sinners, so, by the obedience of one, many might be made
ous. Rom. v. 19. And hence the gospel so mightily
gnifies the *grace* of God, his *love* and *goodness,* as being un-
paralleled, unspeakable, inconceivable, passing knowledge.
God so loved the world, says Christ: *God commendeth his love,*
saith Paul: *Herein is love,* says John. It has *height* and *length,*
depth and *breadth.* It is *rich grace,* and the *exceeding riches of*
ce. And why? why is it so magnified and extolled? Why,
this, among other reasons, because all this was done while
e did not love God; while we were *sinners;* while we were
ungodly; while we were *enemies;* while we were *exposed to*
wrath, guilty before God, perishing, lost, without strength.
Thus God has represented it in his word; his *word* which is
the *image* of his mind, and which shows us how he looks up-
on things, and how they really are. See *John* iii. 16. 36. *Rom.*
v. 6, 7, 8. 1 *John* iv. 10. *Eph.* i. 7. and ii. 7, 8. and iii. 19.
Mat. xviii. 11, &c.

Never, therefore, can a sinner rightly understand the gospel of Christ, or see his need of the provision therein made, or in any measure make a just estimate of the grace of God therein displayed, until he is, in some measure, convinced and made really sensible, by the spirit of God, that he is actually in such a sinful, guilty, helpless, undone condition. This, therefore, is absolutely necessary, in order to a genuine compliance with the gospel by faith in Jesus Christ. *Luke* v. 31. *For the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.* And as this is requisite, in order to the first act of faith, so, for the same reason, must we all our days live under a realizing sense of this our sinful, guilty, undone state, by nature, and in ourselves, in order to live by faith. And this will make Christ precious,

and the grace of the gospel precious; and effectually awaken us to gratitude and thankfulness; for now every thing in our circumstances, wherein we are better of it than the damned, will be accounted so great a mercy, and the effect of mere grace. And so far as we are from a clear sight and realizing sense of this our sinful, guilty, undone state, so far shall we be insensible of the preciousness of Christ, and the freeness of grace, and the greatness of God's mercy towards us.

Thus, having considered the *grounds* upon which the most high God did look upon mankind as being in a perishing condition, and the *motives* whereby he was excited to enter upon any methods for their recovery, we proceed now more particularly to consider the *ways* and *means* he has taken and used to bring it about.

SECTION III.

CONCERNING THE NATURE AND NECESSITY OF SATISFACTION FOR SIN.

I am now,

III. To show *what necessity there was for a Mediator, and how the way to life has been opened by him whom God has provided.* It is plainly supposed that there was a necessity of a Mediator, and of such an one too as God had actually provided, in order to our salvation; for, otherwise, it had been no *love* or goodness in God to have *given his only begotten Son.* For there can be no love or goodness in his doing that for us which we do not need, and without which we might have been saved as well. Nor is it to be supposed that God would give his Son to die for a guilty world without *urgent necessity.* If some cheaper and easier way might have been found out, he would surely have spared his beloved Son; he had no inclination to make light of his Son's blood; it was a *great thing* for a GOD to become *incarnate,* and *die;* and there must, therefore, have been some very urgent considerations, to induce the wise Governor of the world to such an expedient. And here, then, these things may be particularly inquired into:

1. What necessity was there of satisfaction for sin?

2. What satisfaction has there been made? And wherein does its sufficiency consist?

3. How has the way to life been opened by the means?

4. What methods has the great Governor of the world entered upon for the actual recovery of sinful creatures?

1. We are to consider *what necessity there was of satisfaction for sin.* It was needful, or else no satisfaction would have been ever required or made. And the necessity was certainly very great and urgent, or the *Father* would never have been willing to have given his *Son,* or the Son to have undertaken the work, a work attended with so much labour and suffering. But why was it necessary? This, I think, will appear, if we deliberately and seriously weigh these things:

(1.) *That God, the great Creator, Preserver, and absolute Lord of the whole world, is not only a Being of infinite understanding and almighty power, but also a Being infinite and unchangeable in all moral propensities: he loves right and hates wrong to an infinite degree, and unchangeably; or, in scripture-language, he thus loves righteousness and hates iniquity.* By his infinite understanding, he sees all things as being what they really are. Whatsoever is fit and right, he beholds as being such; and whatsoever is unfit and wrong, he also beholds as being such. And as are his views, so is the temper of his heart; he infinitely loves that which is fit and right, and infinitely hates that which is unfit and wrong: or, in other words, he has an infinite sense of the moral fitness and unfitness of things, and an answerable frame of heart; i. e. infinitely loves the one and infinitely hates the other. From eternity, God has had an all-comprehensive view of things, of every thing that was possible to be, or that actually would be, and of all the relations one being would bear to another, and the relation that all would bear to him; and has seen what conduct would be right and fit in him towards them, and in them towards him and towards one another, and what would be wrong: and, from eternity, it has been his *nature* infinitely to love that which is right, and hate that which is wrong.—And this, *his nature,* has influenced him in all his conduct, as moral Governor of the world; and he has given so bright a representation of it, that this seems to be the first and most

natural idea of God that we can attain. It shines through all the scriptures, through the law and the gospel, and through his whole conduct, in a thousand instances.

God does not appear to be a Being influenced, actuated, and governed by a groundless arbitrary self-will, having no regard to right reason; to the moral fitness and unfitness of things; nor does he appear to be a Being governed and actuated by a groundless fondness to his creatures. If a thing is not right, he will not do it, merely because he is above control, is the greatest and strongest, and can bear down all before him. *Gen.* xviii. 25. And if a thing is wrong, he will not connive at it at all, because it was acted by his creatures, although ever so dear to him, and although the most exalted in dignity, honour, and privileges; for instance, the *sinning angels; sinning Adam;* the *Israelites* in the wilderness, his peculiar people. Moses, for speaking unadvisedly with his lips, shall not enter into Canaan. David, the man after his own heart, he sinned; and *the sword,* says God, *shall not depart from thy house.* Yea, he spared not his *own Son,* when he stood in the room of sinners. If he had been governed by any thing like human fondness, surely it would now have appeared. And besides, if that were the case, he could never bear to see the damned lie in the dreadful torments of hell to all eternity. Indeed, by all he has said, and by all he has done, he appears to have an infinite sense of the moral fitness and unfitness of things, and an answerable frame of heart; and to be governed and actuated by this temper, under the direction of infinite wisdom. Hence, as is his *nature,* so is the *name* which he has taken to himself, viz. the HOLY ONE *of Israel.*

It is true he is a Being of infinite goodness and mercy; yet that is not a *fond,* but a *holy* propensity, under the government of infinite wisdom: that is, he considers the happiness and good of his creatures, his intelligent creatures, as being what it is. He sees what it is worth, and of how great importance it is, and how much to be desired in itself, and compared with other things: he sees it to be just what it really is, and has an answerable disposition of heart, i. e. is desirous of their happiness, and averse to their misery, in an exact proportion

2. What satisf… themselves. It is true, so does its sufficiency … there is not any act of kindness 3. How has th… he can find in his heart to do it; 4. What m… on to do it, if, all things consider- tered upon for … he judges it fit and best: and yet, 1. We ar… true, such is the perfect rectitude and tion or si… nature, that there is not any act of jus- have been … or any misery so dreadful, but that he can tainly ve… his creatures' happiness notwithstanding, to been wi… nce, and inflict that misery, if need so require; taken … infinite inclination thereto. He regards their sufferi… and misery as being what they are, of very great pear… in themselves, but of little importance, compared (… thing else. He had rather the whole system of in- L… creatures should lie in hell to all eternity, than do the d… st thing that is in itself unfit and wrong. Yea, if it … put to his own case, if we could possibly suppose such a …g, he would make it appear that he does as he would be …e by, when he punishes sinners to all eternity. It was, in a sort, put to his own case once, when his Son, who was as himself, stood in the room of a guilty world; and his heart did not fail him; but he appeared as great an enemy to sin then as ever he did, or will do to all eternity. His treating his Son as he did, in the garden and upon the cross, immediately himself and by his instruments, was as bright an evidence of the temper of his heart, as if he had damned the whole world. He appeared what he was then, as much as he will at the day of judgment. He is infinite in goodness; yet he is infinitely averse to do any act of kindness, at the expense of justice, from mere fondness to his creatures.

And as his goodness is not fondness, so his justice is not *cruelty*. He infinitely hates that which is unfit and wrong, and is disposed to testify his hatred in some visible, public manner, by inflicting some proportionable punishment; not because sinners hurt him, and so make him angry and revengeful; for their obedience can do him no good, nor their disobedience any hurt, *Job* xxxv. 6, 7.; nor indeed so much because they hurt themselves; for if they did wrong in no other respect, he would never treat them with such severity:

but this is the truth of the case; the great Governor of the world has an infinite sense of the moral fitness and unfitness of things, and an answerable frame of heart: and so he infinitely loves that which is fit, and commends and rewards it: and infinitely hates the contrary, and forbids and punishes it; only it must be remembered, that the rewards he grants to the good are of mere bounty as to them, because they can deserve nothing. *Rom.* xi. 35. But the punishments he inflicts on the wicked are pure justice, because they deserve all. *Rom.* vi. 23. For although creatures cannot merit *good* at the hands of God, from whom they receive all, and to whom they owe all, yet they can merit *evil.* Nevertheless, rewards and punishments are both alike in this respect, viz. that they are visible public testimonies borne by the Governor of the world to the moral amiableness of virtue on the one hand, and to the moral hatefulness of vice on the other. The one is not the effect of fondness, nor the other of cruelty; but the one results from the holiness and goodness of the divine nature, and the other from his holiness and justice. By the one it appears how he loves virtue, and how exceedingly bountiful he is: and, by the other, how he hates sin, and how much he is disposed to discountenance it, by treating it as being what it is.

Thus, I say, in the first place, we must consider God, the supreme Governor of the world, as a Being not only of infinite understanding and almighty power, but also infinite and unchangeable in all moral propensities; as one having a perfect sense of the moral fitness and unfitness of things, and an answerable frame of heart; or, in scripture-language, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty; the holy one of Israel. The Lord God gracious and merciful, but by no means clearing the guilty. Of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. Who loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity. Who renders to every one according to their doings,* &c. Without a right idea of God, the supreme Governor of the world, and a realizing, living, sense of him on our hearts, it is impossible we should rightly understand the methods he has taken to open a way for his mercy to come out after a rebellious, guilty world, or truly see into the grounds of his conduct, the reasons of his doing as he has done. If we know God, and have a taste for moral

to th… disposition to understand the gospel; gre… *John* vii. 17. and viii. 47. For, or … great affair of our redemption, he has y… himself.

…*finitely excellent, glorious, and amiable in be*… His having such a nature or temper, and, at … being of infinite understanding and almighty … renders him infinitely excellent, glorious, and amiable, … beyond the conceptions of any finite mind. Isa. vi. 3. *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty, the whole earth is full of thy glory.*

Hence, *God loves, esteems, and delights in himself infinitely*: not indeed from what we call a selfish spirit; for could we suppose there was another just what he is, and himself an inferior, he would love, esteem, and delight in that other, as entirely as he does now in himself. It is his being what he is, that is the ground of his self-love, esteem, and delight.

Hence, again, *he loves to act like himself*, in all his conduct as moral Governor of the world, *as entirely as he loves himself*; and it is *as much contrary to his nature* to *counteract the temper of his heart*, in his public conduct, as to *cease to be what he is*. And the plain reason is, that there is the same ground for the one as for the other. He loves himself, because he is most excellent in being what he is; and, for the same reason, he loves to act like himself, because that is most excellent too. He cannot be willing to cease to be of that temper or nature he is of, because it is most excellent; and, for the same reason, he cannot be willing to counteract it, because it is most excellent to act agreeably to it in all things. He is under necessity to love himself; and he is under the same necessity to act like himself. *Gen.* xviii. 25. Hence it is a common thing for God, in great earnestness, to say in his word, *I will do so and so, and they shall* KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD: as if he should say; "A guilty, rebellious race may think and say what they will of me, yet I am what I am, and I will act like myself, and all the world shall know that I am the Lord, i. e. that I am what I pretend to be. They shall know it by my conduct, sooner or later."

(3.) *God cannot be said to act like himself, unless he appears as great an enemy to sin, in his public government of the world, as he really is at heart.* If his conduct as moral Governor of the world, the whole being taken together, should look with a more favourable aspect towards sin, or appear less severe than really he is, then it is self-evident that his conduct would not be like himself, nor would it tend to exhibit a true idea of him to all attentive spectators in all his dominions. If his creatures and subjects, in such a case, should judge of his *nature* by his *conduct*, they would necessarily frame wrong notions of the divine Being: and he himself must see and know that he did not act like himself; nor appear, in his conduct, to be what he was in his heart.

But God, the supreme Governor of the world, does, at heart, look upon sin as an infinite evil; and his aversion and enmity to it is infinite. He looks upon it, and, (to speak of him after the manner of men,) is affected towards it, as being what it really is. But it is infinitely wrong and wicked for us not to love him with all our heart, and obey him in every thing. The least sin is an infinite evil; and such he sees it to be, and as such does he abhor it. The infinite evil of sin does not consist in its lessening God's essential glory or blessedness; for they are both independent on us, and far out of our reach: nor does it consist merely in its tendency to make us miserable: but, in its own nature, it is infinitely wrong, inasmuch as we are under infinite obligations to perfect holiness. Our obligations to love God with all our heart, are in proportion to his amiableness; but that is infinite: not to do so, therefore, is infinitely wrong. But, as has been said, God has an infinite sense of the moral fitness and unfitness of things, and an answerable frame of heart; i. e. he infinitely loves that which is right, and infinitely hates that which is wrong. And therefore he infinitely hates the least sin.

If, therefore, he acts like himself, he must in his public government of the world, his whole conduct being taken together, appear, in the most evident manner, to be an infinite enemy to the least sin. He must appear infinitely severe against it; and never do any thing, which, all things considered, seems to look at all with another aspect.

(4.) *God, the supreme Governor of the world, cannot be said to appear an infinite enemy to sin, and to appear infinitely severe against it, and that without the least appearance of a favourable aspect towards it in his conduct, unless he does always, throughout all his dominions, not only in word threaten, but in fact punish it, with infinite severity, without the least mitigation or abatement in any one instance whatsoever.*

If he should never, in his government of the world, say or do any thing against sin, it would seem as if he was a friend to it, or at least very indifferent about it. If he should say, and not do; threaten to punish, but never inflict the punishment, his creatures and subjects might be tempted to say, "He pretends to be a mighty enemy to sin, and that is all." If he should generally punish sin with infinite severity, but not always, there would at least be some favourable aspect towards sin in his visible conduct; and his subjects might be ready to say, "If he can suffer sin to go half unpunished, why not altogether? And if altogether at one time, why not at another? And if he can abate the threatened punishment in some degree, in some instances, why not altogether, in all instances? If there is no absolute necessity that sin should be punished, why does he ever punish it? But if it be absolutely necessary, why does he ever suffer it to go unpunished?" It would seem, at least by such a conduct, as if sin was not so exceedingly bad a thing but that it might escape punishment sometimes; and as if God was not such an infinite, unchangeable enemy to it, but that he might be disposed to treat it with a little favour. In a word, if God should always punish sins, not one excepted, and that throughout all his dominions, and yet not do it always with *infinite severity*; but, in some instances, one in a million we will say, should abate a little, and but a very little; yet so much as he abates, be it more or less, so much does he treat sin in a favourable manner, and so much does he fall short of treating it with due severity, and so far does he appear, in his conduct, from being an infinite, unchangeable enemy to it. So that it is very evident that he cannot, in his conduct, as moral Governor of the world, appear an infinite, unchangeable enemy to sin, without the least appearance to the contrary, in any other possible way or method, than by

always punishing it with infinite severity, without the least abatement, in any one instance, in any part of his dominions, in time or eternity. And this would be to act like himself; and in and by such conduct, he would appear to be what he is. But to do otherwise, would be to counteract his own nature, and give a false representation of his heart, by a conduct unlike himself.

Thus, it is the nature of God, the great Governor of the world, in all his conduct, to act like himself. But he cannot be said to act like himself, unless he appears as great an enemy to sin, and as severe against it, as he really is, without the least shadow of the contrary: but his conduct cannot appear in this light, unless he does, in fact, punish sin with infinite severity, throughout all his dominions, without the least mitigation, in any one instance, in time or eternity: therefore it is the nature of God, the Governor of the world, to do so; and therefore he can no sooner, nor any easier, be willing to let any sin go unpunished, than he can to cease to be what he is *. For, as was before proved, it is as impossible for him to act contrary to his own nature, as it is to cease to be what he is: and he can consent to the one as easily as to the other.

Hence, we may learn, this is *really a branch of the law of nature, That sin should be punished:* it results from the nature of God, the Governor of the world; it was no arbitrary constitution; it did not result from the divine sovereignty. It would, in the nature of things, have been no evil for Adam to have eaten of the *tree of knowledge*, had not God forbidden it; herein God exercised his sovereign authority, as absolute Lord of all things. But in threatening sin with eternal death, he acted not as a sovereign, but as a righteous Governor: his nature prompted him to do so; he could not have done otherwise. As it is said in another case, *It is impossible for God to lie;* so it may be said here, *It is impossible for God to let sin*

* God's mild and kind conduct towards a guilty world at present, is nothing inconsistent with this; because mankind are now dealt with in and through a Mediator, upon whom *our sins have been laid*, and who has been *made a curse* for us. In him our sins have been treated with infinite severity, without the least abatement. But for this, God's conduct, no doubt, would be very inconsistent with his perfections.

go unpunished. As he cannot go counter to himself *in speaking*, so neither *in acting*. It is as contrary to his nature to let sin go unpunished, as it is to lie; for his *justice* is as much himself, as his *truth*; and it is, therefore, equally impossible he should act contrary to either.

Hence, this branch of the law of nature *is not capable of any repeal or abatement.* For since it necessarily results from the nature of God, the Governor of the world, it must necessarily remain in force so long as God continues to be what he is. Besides, if God should repeal it, he must not only counteract his own nature, but also give great occasion to all his subjects to think he was once too severe against sin, and that now he had altered his mind, and was become more favourable towards it: which he can no more be willing to do, than he can be willing actually to cease to be what he is. For, as he loves himself perfectly for being what he is, so he perfectly loves to act like himself, and to appear in his conduct just as he is in his heart. Therefore our Saviour expressly asserts, *That heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the law shall fail.* Mat. v. 18.

(5.) *But all this notwithstanding, yet God did, of his infinite goodness and sovereign grace, entertain designs of mercy towards a fallen world: a rebellious, obstinate, stubborn, sinful, guilty, hell-deserving race, under the righteous condemnation of the law: a law, like himself, holy, just, and good.* Particularly, he designed to declare himself reconcileable to this sinful, guilty world; to put mankind into a new state of probation: to try and see if they would repent and return unto him, and to use a variety of methods for their recovery. And to make way for this, he designed to reprieve a guilty world, for a certain space of time, from that utter ruin he had threatened, and to grant a sufficiency of the good things of this life for their support, while in a state of probation; and he also purposed to grant a general resurrection from the dead, that those who should return to him and be reconciled, might be most completely happy in the world to come. And, because he knew their aversion to a reconciliation, therefore he designed to use a variety of external means to bring them to it. And because he knew that mankind would be universally disposed

to hate all such means, (*not liking to have God in their knowledge,*) and cast them off, and get from under them, therefore he designed, in his sovereign grace, to select some part of mankind, (the Jews, for instance,) with whom, by his special providence, by the more open or secret workings of his almighty power, such means should be continued. And, in the fulness of time, he purposed also to use equal, yea, greater means with various, nations of the Gentiles. And because he knew that all external means notwithstanding, yet all, with one consent, would refuse to repent, and convert, and be reconciled, therefore he designed, by his providence, and by the more common influences of his spirit, to take some further pains with many, and try them. And because he knew that this would never effectually persuade them, through the great perverseness of mankind, therefore he designed, by the special influences of his Holy Spirit, through his almighty power and all-conquering grace, all their obstinacy notwithstanding, yet to reclaim, and recover, and bring home to himself, a certain number in this world, and here train them up for eternal glory, and finally bring them thereunto; and all of his sovereign goodness, and all to the praise of the glory of his grace. And towards the latter end of that space of time, in which this world was to be reprieved, it was his purpose more eminently to destroy satan's kingdom on earth, and his influence among mankind, and more generally recover the guilty nations from his thraldom, and set up his own kingdom on earth, to flourish in great glory and prosperity a thousand years. Such were his designs, as is evident by the event of things, and from the revelation he has made in his word of what is yet to come to pass.

(6.) *But as the case then stood, it was not fit that any of these favours should be granted to a guilty world; no, not any thing that had so much as, (all things considered,) the nature of a mercy, without some sufficient* salvo *to the divine honour**. In-

* Obj. *But if God could not, consistently with his perfections, show any mercy to a guilty world without a sufficient* salvo *to his honour, how could he, consistently with his perfections, provide them a mediator? Was not this a great mercy? And what* salvo *had he for his honour in doing it?*

Ans. The very doing of this thing itself was to secure his own honour. This

deed, some kind of reprieve, I presume, might have been granted to a guilty world, so as to have suffered the human race to have propagated, and the whole designed number to have been born; a reprieve, all things considered, not of the nature of a mercy. So the fallen angels seem to be under some kind of a reprieve; for *they are reserved in chains*, to the judgment of the great day, as condemned prisoners. 2 *Peter* ii. 4. And hence, a number of them once cried out, *Art thou come to torment us before the time?* Mat. viii. 29. Yet we are not taught, in scripture, to look upon this as a mercy to them. But the scriptures teach us to consider our reprieve, our worldly comforts, our means of grace, our space for repentance, the restraints of providence, and the common influences of the spirit, as mercies; yea, as great mercies. *Rom.* ii. 4. *Isaiah* v. 4. *Deut.* x. 18. *Acts* xiv. 17. *Rev.* ii. 21. All these common favours, therefore, as well as special and saving mercies, were not proper to be granted to such a guilty, hell-deserving world, by a holy, sin-hating, sin-revenging God. This was not to treat mankind as it was fit and meet they should be treated. It was contrary to law that any favour at all should, without a *salvo* to the divine honour, be granted them; for, by law, they were all doomed to destruction. And it was contrary to the divine nature to do any thing in the case, that, all things considered, would have, in the least measure, a favourable aspect towards sin; or so much as in the least tend to make him seem less severe against it, than if he had damned the whole world for their apostacy and rebellion.

If God had set aside his law, which was the image of his

was the very end he had nextly in view. Were it not for this end, a mediator had not been needful; but a guilty world might have been pardoned by an act of absolute sovereign grace. Now his taking such a glorious method to secure his honour, and the honour of his law, and government, and sacred authority, had no tendency to misrepresent them. He acted in it just like himself. His infinite wisdom, holiness, justice, and goodness, are all at once most perfectly displayed in this conduct of the supreme Governor of the world; particularly, his infinite hatred of sin, and disposition to punish it, appeared in the very act of appointing his Son to be a sacrifice for the sins of the world. For, in this act, it was manifest, that he did choose his own dear Son should himself bear the punishment of sin, rather than let it go unpunished.

heart, and undertaken and shown all these favours to a guilty world, without any *salvo* to his honour, his visible conduct would have been directly contrary to the inward temper of his heart; and by it he would have counteracted his nature, and misrepresented himself, dishonoured his law, rendered his authority weak and contemptible, and opened a wide door for the encouragement of rebellion, throughout all his dominions; and, in effect, gotten to himself the character the devil designed to give of him to our first parents, when he said, *Ye shall not surely die*, (Gen. iii. 4.) i. e. "God is not so severe against sin as he pretends to be, and as you think for; nor does he hate it so much, nor will he do as he says in the case." It was therefore infinitely impossible.

(7.) *To the end, therefore, that a way might be opened for him to put his designs of mercy in execution, consistently with himself, consistently with the honour of his holiness and justice, law and government, and sacred authority, something must be done by him in a public manner, as it were, in the sight of all worlds, whereby his infinite hatred of sin, and unchangeable resolution to punish it, might be as effectually manifested as if he had damned the whole world.* MERELY his *saying* that he infinitely hates sin, and looks upon it worthy of an infinite punishment, would not have manifested the inward temper of his heart in such a meridian brightness as if he had damned the whole world *in very deed:* but rather, his *saying* one thing, and *doing* another directly contrary, would have been going counter to himself; especially, considering him as acting in the capacity of a *Governor*, to whom, by office, it belongs to put the law in execution, and cause justice to take place. For him first to make a law, threatening eternal death to the least sin, makes him appear infinitely just and holy; but then to have no regard to that law in his conduct, but go right contrary to it, without any *salvo* to his honour, is quite inconsistent, and directly tends to bring himself, his law, and authority, into the greatest contempt. Something, I say, therefore, must be DONE, to make his hatred of the sin of mankind, and disposition to punish it, as manifest as if he had damned the whole world; to the end that the honour of his holiness and justice, of his law and government, and sa-

cred authority, might be effectually secured. To act contrary to his own nature, was impossible; to have no regard to the honour of his law and government, was unreasonable; a guilty world had better all have been damned.

Thus, from the perfections of God, and from the nature of the thing, we see the necessity there was that satisfaction should be made for sin, in order to open an honourable way in which divine mercy might come out after a rebellious, guilty, hell-deserving world.

To conclude this head, the necessity of satisfaction for sin, seems also to be held forth in the scriptures, and to be implied in God's conduct in this affair. In the Old Testament, the necessity of an atonement for sin was taught in types and figures. The man that sinned was to bring his offering before the Lord, and lay his hands upon it, and confess his sin over it; and so, as it were, transfer his sin and guilt to it; then was it to be slain, *(for death is the wages of sin,)* and burnt upon the altar, (for the sinner deserves to be consumed in the fire of God's wrath,) and the blood thereof was to be sprinkled round about, *(for without shedding of blood there is no remission;)* nor was there any other way of obtaining pardon prescribed but this, which naturally taught the necessity of satisfaction for sin, and led the pious Jews to some general notion of the great atonement which God would provide, and to a cordial reliance thereon for acceptance in the sight of God. *Lev.* iv. and xvi. *Heb.* ix. But, in the New Testament, the nature and necessity of satisfaction for sin, and the impossibility of finding acceptance with God, unless through the atonement of Christ, is taught in language very plain and express; particularly in the third chapter of the epistle to the *Romans.* St. Paul, having proved both *Jews* and *Greeks* to be *under sin,* and all the world *to be guilty before God,* and that *every mouth must be stopped,* in the *first* and *second chapters,* and in the beginning of the *third,* does, in the *next place,* enter upon, and begin to explain the way of salvation, by free grace, through Jesus Christ. "We cannot," says he, "be justified by the deeds of the law, (*Chap.* iii. 20.) but it must be freely by grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, (*ver.* 24.) But if we are not justified by the deeds of the law; by our own

obedience, how will God, our Judge, appear to be righteous? If the law condemns us, and yet he justifies us, i. e. if he thus proceeds contrary to law, to clear and approve when that condemns, how will he appear to be a just and upright Governor and Judge, who, loving righteousness and hating iniquity, is disposed always to render to every one his due? Why, there is a way contrived, wherein the righteousness of God is manifested in our justification without the law's being obeyed by us; a way unto which the types of the law and predictions of the prophets did all bear witness; a way in which the righteousness of God is manifested in and by Christ, (*ver.* 21, 22.) But how? Why, God hath *set him forth to be a propitiation, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness,* THAT HE MIGHT BE JUST, *and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*" The apostle seems evidently to suppose that God *could not have been just,* had he not thus declared his righteousness; and that he actually took this method to declare and manifest his righteousness, *to the end he might be just;* might act agreeably to his nature, the original standard of justice, and to his law, which is the transcript of his nature, and the established rule of righteousness between him our Governor, and us his subjects. He set forth his Son *to be a propitiation for the remission of sin, to declare his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier,* &c.

BESIDES, The necessity of satisfaction for sin, and that even by the death of Christ, seems to be implied in our Saviour's prayer in the garden, *If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* Mat. xxvi. 39. And again, (ver. 42.) *O, my father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done:* as if Christ had said, "If it be possible thy designs of mercy might be put into execution, and poor sinners saved, consistently with thine honour, without my drinking this cup, O that it might be! but if it is not possible it should be so, I consent." Satisfaction for sin being necessary, and there being no easier way in which satisfaction for sin might be made, and a door opened for mercy to come to a guilty world, consistently with the divine ho-

nour, seems to have been the very ground of the Father's willing him, and of Christ's consenting to drink that cup. And, indeed, is it possible to conceive why Christ should be willing to suffer what he did, or why his Father should desire it, were it not an expedient absolutely necessary, and nothing else would do, so that it must be, or not one of the race of Adam be ever saved, consistently with the divine honour? If it was not so absolutely necessary; if there was some cheaper and easier way that would have done, why did the Father will this? or how had Christ a sufficient call to undertake it? or, indeed, what need was there for him to undertake it? or what good would it do? If sin was not, in very deed, so bad a thing that it could not be pardoned without such a satisfaction, why was such a satisfaction insisted upon? why a greater satisfaction than was needful? Could a holy and wise God set so light by the blood of his dear Son, as to desire it to be shed without the most urgent necessity? Or why should the Governor of the world make more ado than was necessary, and then magnify his love in giving his Son, when mankind might have been saved without it? Did this become the great Governor of the world? or would God have us look upon his conduct in such a light? Surely no. Verily, therefore, such was the case of a rebellious, guilty world, that God looked upon them too bad to be released, consistently with the divine honour, from the threatened destruction, unless such a mediator should interpose, and such a satisfaction for sin be made; and therefore Christ acquiesced in his will, as being wise, holy, just, and good. And this being supposed, the love of God, in giving his Son, appears even such as it is represented to be; unparalleled, unspeakable, inconceivable; so, also, does the love of Christ in undertaking. And thus, from the perfections of God, and from the scriptures, and from God's conduct in this affair, it appears that a full satisfaction for sin was necessary, in order to its being pardoned, or any favour shown to a guilty world, consistently with the divine honour.

And if we, in very deed, did stand in such need, such an absolute, perishing need of a mediator, as this comes to; if God looked upon things in such a light, then must we see this our need of a mediator, and look upon things in this

light too, and have a sense of this great truth upon our hearts: for, otherwise, we neither truly understand what a state we are in, nor what need we have of a mediator. And if we do not truly understand what a state we are in, nor our need of the mediator God has provided, how can we be in a disposition to receive him as he is offered in the gospel, and truly and understandingly to rely upon him, his death and sufferings; his worth and merits; his mediation and intercession, as the gospel invites us to do?

To see our need of Christ to be our atonement; to see our need of his propitiatory sacrifice to open the way for the Govenor of the world to be reconciled to us consistently with his honour, is a very different thing from what many imagine. Some fancy they want Christ to purchase an abatement of the law, and satisfy for their imperfections; and then they hope to procure the divine favour by their own goodness. Some trust in Christ and the free grace of God through him, as they think, and yet, at the same time, look upon God as obliged, in justice, to save them, if they do as well as they can. Some, who lay not so high a claim to the divine favour, yet, by their tears and prayers, hope to move the compassions of God, and, by their fair promises, to engage his favour, and would secretly think it hard, if after all, God should cast them off; and yet they pretend to see their need of Christ, and to trust in him. But these are all evidently so far from seeing their need of Christ, that, in the temper and exercises of their hearts, they implicitly and practically deny any need of him at all; to their own sense, they are good enough to be accepted in the sight of God, upon their own account. *Rom.* x. 3. Others who have had great awakenings and convictions, and see much of their own badness, and do, in a sort, renounce their own righteousness; they look to be saved by free grace; but, in all the exercises of their hearts, see no need of a mediator, and have nothing to do with him: they see no reason why they may not be pitied and saved by free grace, without any respect to the atonement of Christ. They do not understand that they are so bad that it would be a reproach to the Governor of the world to show them mercy, otherwise than through a mediator. Others, again, who talk much of

Christ, and of faith, and of living by faith, and cry down works, and think themselves most evangelical, yet, after all, *only believe that Christ died for them in particular, and that they shall be saved:* this is their *faith*, and this their *trusting* in Christ; whereby it is evident, they never truly saw their need of Christ, nor have they any respect to him under the proper character of a Mediator. But then do persons see their need of Christ, when, from a sense of what they are, and of what God is, they are convinced that they are too bad to be pardoned and accepted; so bad that any thing short of damnation is too good for them; so that it would be inconsistent with the divine perfections, and to the reproach of the great Governor of the world, to show them any favour without some sufficient *salvo* to his honour. Now they see their need of Christ, and are prepared to exercise *faith in his blood*, (to use the apostle's phrase. *Rom.* iii 23.) and not till now: for men cannot be said to see their need of Christ and his atonement, unless they see *that* in their case which renders his atonement *needful;* but its being inconsistent with the divine perfections, and to the dishonour of God, to pardon sin without satisfaction, was *that* which made an atonement *needful*. Therefore, sinners must see their case to be such as that it would be inconsistent with the divine perfections, and to the dishonour of God, to grant them pardon without satisfaction for their sins, in order to see their need of Christ and of his atonement. When they see their case to be such, then they begin to see things as they are; to view them in the same light that God does; to perceive upon what grounds, and for what reasons, a mediator was necessary, and why and upon what accounts they want one; and hereby a foundation is laid for them, understandingly, to have a fiducial recourse to that mediator which God has provided, that, through him, consistently with the divine perfections, they may be received to favour: and so, from Christ the Mediator, and from the free grace of God through him, do they take all their encouragement to come to God, in hopes of pardon and acceptance, and eternal life.—And thus they look *to be justified by free grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ*, which is what the gospel intends and proposes. *Rom.* iii. 24. And from an increasing

sense of their unworthiness and ill deserts, they, through the course of their lives, more and more grow up into a disposition to *live the life they live in the flesh, by faith in the Son of God,* always having respect to him as their *great high-priest,* in all their approaches to the *mercy-seat,* having *access to God by him,* who has styled himself the *door of the sheep,* and *the way to the Father,* which is the very thing the gospel proposes, and invites and encourages us unto. Heb. ix. 12. *By his own blood he entered into the holy place,* having *obtained eternal redemption for us.* Ver. 24. *Into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for us.* Heb. x. 19—22. *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us; and having an high-priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.* Rom. iii. 25. *For him hath God set forth to be a propitiation for sin, to declare his righteousness, that he might be just,* &c.

And a clear, realizing sense of these things on our hearts will lay a foundation for us to see how the gospel-way of salvation is calculated to bring much glory to God, and abase sinners in the very dust, which is that wherein the glory of the gospel very much consists. *Rom.* iii. 27. *Eph.* i. 3—12. And we shall learn to rejoice to see God alone exalted, and freely to take our proper place, and lie down in the dust, abased before the Lord for ever. And indeed it is perfectly fit in this case, that the rebel-wretch should come down, and be so far from finding fault with the great Governor of the world, and with his holy, just, and good law, that he should rejoice that God has taken such an effectual method to secure his own honour, and the honour of his law. We ought to be glad with all our hearts that the supreme Governor of the world did put on state, and stand for his honour, and the honour of his law, without the least abatement; and did insist upon it that sin should be punished, the sinner humbled, and grace glorified; these were things of the greatest importance: and we ought to choose to be saved in such a way, to have God honoured, and ourselves humbled. And it is evident this must be the temper of every one that comes into a genuine compliance with the gospel. Thus much concering the ne-

cessity of satisfaction for sin. But here, now, some may be ready to inquire,

Was it not as necessary that the precepts of the law should be obeyed, as that the penalty should be suffered, to make way for the sinner not only to be pardoned, but also to be received to a state of favour, and entitled to eternal life? To which I answer,

1. It is true, we need not only a pardon from the hands of God, the supreme Governor of the world, in whose sight, and against whom we have sinned; we need, I say, not only to be pardoned, delivered from condemnation, freed from the curse of the law, saved from hell; but we want something further. We want to be renewed to God's image, taken into his family, put among his children, and made partakers of his everlasting favour and love. We need not only to be delivered from all those *evils* which are come upon us, and which we are exposed unto, through our apostacy from God; but we want to be restored to the enjoyment of all that *good* which we should have had, had we kept the covenant of our God.

2. It is true, also, that mankind, according to the tenour of the first covenant, were not to have been confirmed in a state of holiness and happiness; were not to have had eternal life, merely upon the condition of being innocent, (for such was Adam by creation,) but perfect obedience to every precept of the divine law was required. *Rom.* x. 5. *Gal.* iii. 10. The performance of such an obedience, was *that righteousness* which was, by covenant, to entitle him to life.

3. Since the fall, all mankind are destitute of *that righteousness;* nor can they attain unto it. *Rom.* iii. 9—20.

4. But our natural obligations to love God with all our hearts, and obey him in every thing, still remain: for they are, in their own nature, unalterable. They will be for ever the same so long as God remains what he is, and we are his creatures. There was the same reason, therefore, after the fall, why we should love and obey God, as ever there was.—There was the same reason, therefore, that the condition of the first covenant should be fulfilled as ever there was. It was reasonable, originally, or God would never have insisted upon it: and therefore it is reasonable now, since our aposta-

ay; and God has the same grounds to insist upon it for ever: but we cannot perform it ourselves; it was necessary, therefore, that it should be performed by Christ, our surety. But perhaps some may still say,

When Christ had fully satisfied for all our sins, and so opened a way for believers to be considered as entirely free from any guilt, why might not the Governor of the world now, of his sovereign goodness and bounty, have bestowed eternal life, without any more to do? What need was there for Christ to fulfill all righteousness in our room? To which I answer:

When Adam was newly created, he was innocent; free from any guilt: and why might not the supreme Governor of the world, now, without any more to do, have bestowed upon him eternal life and blessedness, of his mere sovereign goodness? What need was there that his everlasting welfare should be entirely suspended upon the uncertain condition of his good behaviour? Had not God just seen how it turned out with the angels that sinned? Did he not know that Adam was liable to sin and undo himself too? And why would he run any venture a second time; especially since the happiness, not only of Adam, but of all his race, a whole world of beings, now lay at stake? If he thinks that if but one man should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul, his loss would be infinitely great, what must the everlasting welfare of a whole race be worth in his account? And would infinite wisdom and infinite goodness venture and hazard all this, *needlessly*? Yea, would such a Being have done so, had there not been reasons *of infinite weight* to move him to it; something of greater importance than the eternal welfare of all mankind? No doubt there was something, and something of very great importance, that influenced the infinitely wise and good Governor of the world to such a conduct; something so *very great*, as to render his conduct, in that affair, perfectly holy and wise: perfectly beautiful, excellent, and glorious. It does not look like a mere arbitrary constitution. It was doubtless ordered so, because God saw it was perfectly fit, and right, and best. But why was it fit, and right, and best? Whatever the reason was, doubtless for the same reason it was fit, and right, and best, that the *second Adam* should perform the same condition: fulfil all righteousness, to

the end that, by his obedience, we might be made righteous, and so be entitled to life in this way.

It is certain that eternal life and blessedness were not to have been given *absolutely*, i. e. without any condition at all, under the first covenant. Eternal life was not to have been granted merely under the notion of a *gift* from a *sovereign benefactor*; but also under the notion of a *reward*, from the hands of the *moral Governor* of the world. Perfect obedience was the condition. *Do and live.* Rom. x. 5. *Disobey and die.* Gal. iii. 10. This was established by the law of the God of Heaven.

Now, the supreme Governor of the world did this for some end, or for no end: not for no end; for that would reflect upon his wisdom. Was it for his own good, or his creatures' good? Not for his own good; for he is self-sufficient and independent: not for his creatures' good; for it had been better for them, their interest simply considered, to have had eternal life and blessedness given absolutely and unconditionally: for then they would have been at no uncertainties: not liable to fall into sin or misery, but secure and safe for ever. It remains, therefore, that, as moral Governor of the world, he had an eye to the moral fitness of things, and so ordained, because, in itself, in its own nature, it was fit and right.

But why was it fit and right? i. e. What grounds and reasons were there, in the nature of the case, why the great Governor of the world should suspend the everlasting welfare of his creature, man, upon condition of his being in most perfect subjection to himself? i. e. Why should he so much stand upon his own honour, as to insist upon this homage, at the hazard of his creatures' everlasting welfare? i. e. Why did he look upon his own honour as a matter of so great importance? I answer, that, from the rectitude of the divine nature, he is perfectly impartial in all his conduct. It was not, therefore, from any thing like pride, or a selfish spirit, that he stood thus upon his honour; the homage of a worm of the dust could do him no good: nor for want of goodness, that he set so light by his creatures' happiness; but it was fit he should do as he did; the rectitude of his nature, as it were, obliged him to it. For it becomes the Governer of the world, and it

belongs to his office as such, to see to it, that every one has his proper due; and therefore it concerns him, first and above all things, to assert and maintain the rights of the GODHEAD: and this honour was due to God.

He was, by nature, God, and Adam was, by nature, man; he was the Creator, and Adam was his creature; he was moral Governor of the world, and Adam was his subject; he was, by right, Law-giver, and Adam was a free agent capable of, and bound unto, perfect obedience; he was Judge, to whom it belonged to distribute rewards and punishments, and Adam was an accountable creature. Now he only considered himself as being what he was, and his creature, man, as being what he was; and he was affected and acted accordingly. He considered what honour was due to him from man; what obligations man was under to give him his due; that he was capable of doing it voluntarily; that it was fit he should; that it became the Governor of the world to insist upon it; that if he did not do it with all his heart, he could not be considered as a subject fit for the divine favour, but fit only for divine wrath. He thus viewed things as they were, and acted accordingly: What he did, therefore, was perfectly right and fit. To have had no regard to his honour, but only to have consulted his creatures' welfare, would have been a conduct like theirs in Rom. i. 21. 25. *They glorified him not as God. They worshipped and served the creature, more than the Creator**.

* How God's putting Adam into a state of *trial* was consistent with his aiming merely at his happiness as his *last end*, I cannot understand. Sure I am, it must have been better, unspeakably better, for Adam, his interest only considered, to have been immediately *confirmed* in a state of perfect holiness and happiness, without running such an awful venture of eternal ruin and destruction. Nor is there any man on earth that would choose, merely out of regard to his own welfare, to be put into a state of trial, rather than into a state of confirmed holiness and happiness, such as the saints in heaven are now in: and, therefore, I cannot but think that God had a greater regard to something else, than to Adam's happiness. In this instance, it seems plain, *from fact*, that God does not make his creatures' happiness his last end. It is in vain to plead, "that Adam could not be a *moral agent*, unless he was a *free agent*; nor a *free agent* without being *liable* to sin;" for the saints in heaven are *moral agents*, and *free agents* too, and yet are not *liable* to sin. And if God's putting his creatures into a state of trial is not consistent with his aiming merely at their happiness as his last end, then the whole tenour of God's moral government is not consistent therewith: for, from first to

Now, since the second Adam becomes surety, and stands responsible to the Governor of the world, it was fit he should not only suffer the penalty of the broken law, but obey its precepts too, in order to open a door for us not only to be pardoned, but also received to favour, and entitled to eternal life. There was the same reason the *second* Adam should do it, as that the *first* should. The honour of God did as much require it. It was as needful in order to our being considered as subjects fit for the divine favour and eternal life. It became the Governor of the world as much to stand for his honour with one as with the other; and he had as good reason to suspend the everlasting welfare of mankind upon this condition now, as ever; and to have shown no concern for the divine honour, although God had been openly affronted and despised by man's apostacy, but only to have regarded and consulted the welfare of the rebel under righteous condemnation, had been a conduct evidently unbecoming the great Governor of the world.

But again, we may view the case in another point of light. According to the first covenant, eternal life and blessedness were not to have been granted merely under the notion of a *gift*, from a *sovereign Benefactor*; but also under the notion of a *reward* from God, as *moral Governor* of the world; and perfect obedience was the condition. *Do* and *live*. And while eternal life and blessedness were thus promised, by way of *reward* to *virtue*, God's infinite love thereto was hereby testified, and the temper of his heart acted out and displayed. But God infinitely loves to act like himself. On this consideration, therefore, it was necessary that the *second* Adam should fulfil all righteousness, in the room of a guilty, unholy world, to the end that the Governor of the world might bestow grace, and glory, and all good things upon sinners, as a *reward* to Christ's *virtue*, and so hereby testify his infinite love to *virtue*. *And so still act like himself.* It was God's sovereign pleasure to exercise his infinite goodness towards a ruined race, and his *holy* nature prompted him to choose this way;

last, it has been his way to put his creatures into a state of trial; even all his creatures who were capable of moral government.

for he always takes infinite delight in showing regard and respect to *virtue*, in his moral government of the world. He translated Enoch and Elijah; saved Noah from the general deluge; delivered Lot out of Sodom; promised Abraham a posterity numerous as the stars of heaven, and Phinehas an everlasting priesthood; and a thousand things more has he done; and all to bear a *public testimony* of his love to *virtue; this is the thing which the King delights to honour*. The very ground of his love to himself, is the *virtue* or holiness of his nature. In this, his divine beauty and glory primarily consists. *Isaiah* vi. 3. He loves, therefore, to put honour upon the *image* of himself; and, in doing so, he still reflects honour upon himself, the original fountain of *moral excellence*: and, therefore, according to the *first covenant*, and according to the *second*, it was equally fit that eternal life and blessedness should be given as a *reward* to *virtue*, in testimony of his regard thereto.

Thus, from the perfections of God, and the reason and nature of things, the necessity of Christ's obeying the preceptive part of the law, as well as suffering the penalty, in order to our being not only pardoned, but received to the everlasting favour of God, and entitled to eternal life, seems evident.

But, from *scripture*, the point may more easily be confirmed. For therein we are taught that he was appointed, by the Governor of the world, not only to *make reconciliation for iniquity*, but also to *bring in everlasting righteousness*. Dan. ix. 24. And are assured that he is become *the end of the law for righteousness to them that believe*. Rom. x. 4. And that, *by his obedience many are made righteous*. Rom. v. 19. But this work would not have been put upon him, had it been needless; i. e. if God's honour and our salvation could both have been secured without it; for then it had been in vain: which to suppose, reflects much upon the divine wisdom, and quite undermines and nullifies the love, and grace, and kindness of God herein to us; for we had been as well without it. With much evidence, therefore, may we conclude that it was necessary that the *second* Adam, Christ our surety, should *obey* as well as suffer in our room, in order to open a door for our justification and eternal life. And, accordingly, we may observe

that the favours shown to a sinful, guilty world, on Christ's account, are, in scripture, promised under the notion of a *reward* to Christ's *virtue*; for upon making *his soul an offering for sin*, which was the highest *act of virtue*, it was promised that *he should see his seed; prolong his days; have the pleasure of the Lord prospering in his hands*; and that he should *see the travail of his soul*, and *justify many*. Isaiah liii. 10, 11, 12.

Therefore, in order to a genuine compliance with the gospel by faith in Jesus Christ, we must see how far we are from *righteousness*; that all our seeming righteousness is as filthy rags; that we have nothing to recommend us to God; that there is nothing in us rendering us *fit* to be beloved by him, or *meet* to receive any favour at his hands, but every thing to the contrary, to the end we may see our need of Christ; of Christ, *to be made of God unto us, righteousness*, (1 Cor. i. 30.) and our necessity of being *found in him, having on his righteousness*, (Phil. iii. 9.) for this is the design of the gospel, to bring us to look *to be accepted* with God *only in his beloved*, (Eph i. 6. 1 Peter ii. 5.) and to be *justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ*, (Rom. iii. 24.) *without the deeds of the law*, (ver. 28.) ourselves being considered as being, in ourselves, UNGODLY. Chap. iv. ver. 5.

And under a sense how far we are from righteousness; that we have, after all the attainments of this life, no righteousness fit to be mentioned before God; nothing fit to recommend us to his favour, but are still, in ourselves, infinitely unworthy of his love, or the least favour from him; I say, under a deep, effectual sense of this, we must live all our days, to the end that we may never venture to come before God, as the Pharisee did, emboldened by our own goodness, but always as the chief of sinners, desiring to be *found only in Christ, not having on our own righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God by faith*; and so hereby be influenced to *live the life we live in the flesh, by faith on the Son of God*, as St. Paul always did, and as the gospel would have all others do. 1 *Tim.* i. 16. *Phil.* iii. 9. *Gal.* ii. 20. and iii. 11.

To conclude: Thus, we see the grounds of the necessity there was for a mediator and redeemer, to make satisfaction for sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness; and so open an *honourable* way for mercy to come out after a rebellious, guilty world; and a way in which sinners may, with *safety*, return to God.

SECTION IV.

CONCERNING THE SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST, AND OF HIS SATISFACTION AND MERITS,

I proceed now to consider,

2. *What has been done to make satisfaction for sin, and to answer the demands of the preceptive part of the law; and wherein the sufficiency of the same consists.* And,

In the *first* place, what *has been done* has been already hinted; and it may be summed up in a few words. It comprehends all that Christ has *done* and *suffered*, in his *life* and at his *death*. For us he was born; for us he lived; for us he died. He did all *on our account*, being thereunto appointed by his Father. But because his obedience and sufferings were most eminent and remarkable, when, according to the command he had received of his Father, he laid down his life for us, and offered himself a sacrifice for our sins; and because, with a view to this, he *became flesh, and dwelt among us*, therefore the scriptures do more frequently attribute our redemption to what was done then. Hence, we are said to be *redeemed by his blood.* 1 Peter i. 18, 19. To be *justified by his blood.* Rom. v. 9. And all spiritual blessings are frequently represented as the fruits and effects of his *death*. Gal. iii. 13, 14. The sacrifices of the Old Testament pointed out *this* as the great atonement. And to *this* the penmen of the New Testament seem, in a special manner, to have their eyes, as the great propitiation for sin. Thus the *first* Adam was to have yielded a perfect obedience to the divine law in every thing; but that special prohibition, touching the tree of knowledge of good and evil, was in a peculiar manner to try him, that it might be seen whether he would be in subjection to

God in every thing. So, in the garden and upon the cross, our Saviour's spirit of obedience was tried and discovered, and his obedience was perfected and his sufferings completed; and so here, in a more eminent manner, the law was honoured, and justice satisfied; and so the door of mercy opened for a sinful, guilty world. But,

Secondly. As to the *sufficiency* of what has been done to answer the ends proposed, let these things be considered:

(1.) That the person undertaking, as mediator and redeemer, was of sufficient dignity and worth.

(2.) That he was sufficiently authorized to act in such a capacity.

(3.) That what he has done is perfectly suited, in its own nature, to answer all the ends proposed.

(1.) *Jesus Christ, the mediator between God and man, as to his person, was* FIT *for the mediatorial office and work.* He was of sufficient dignity and worth; being, by *nature*, GOD: *equal with the Father; the brightness of his glory; the express image of his person.* Phil. ii. Heb. i. He was *God*, (John i. 1.) as well as *man*, (ver. 14.) And therefore his blood was considered and valued as being *the blood of God.* (Acts xx. 28.) And hence it is called *precious blood*, (1 Peter i. 18, 19.) As to his person, he was equal with God the Father in point of worth and dignity: and it was as much for him to obey and die in the room of a guilty world, as it would have been for *God the Father* himself. In point of dignity and worth, there was none superior to him. He was upon a level with *God the Father.* He was his *equal* and *fellow.* Zech. xiii. 7. *Awake, O sword, against the man that is my* FELLOW. He was as glorious, as honourable, as lovely. He was therefore fit for the office; able to answer all the ends of God, the Governor of the world; of his holiness and justice, law and government, and perfectly to secure the divine honour, viewed in every point of light. The infinite dignity of his nature, as God, made him capable of an obedience of infinite moral excellence, and capable of making a full satisfaction for the infinite evil of sin. He could magnify the law, and make it honourable in a more illustrious manner than all the angels in heaven and men on earth put together; by how

much he was more excellent than they all. If the Son of God obey and die, it is enough : God and his law are for ever secure. Thus, his being, by nature, GOD, rendered him of sufficient dignity for the office and work of a mediator. *Heb.* ix. 14.

And *this* it was, also, which made him capable of undertaking. As he was *God,* he was under no obligations, on his own account, to obey a law made for a creature ; and he had an absolute right to himself. Every person, that is a mere creature, is under natural obligations to perfect obedience on his own account; nor is he his own to dispose of. But the *Son of God* was above a mere creature ; he was a divine person, and, previous to his undertaking, was under no obligation to obedience ; he had an original right to himself, and was not, by nature, under the law ; he was, therefore, at his own disposal, and at full liberty to undertake in our room. He had power to assume human nature, and be made under the law for us, and obey for us, and suffer for us; for he might do what he would with his own. *John* x. 17, 18. The sufficiency of Christ being thus originally founded in his divinity; hence, this is the first thing the apostle to the Hebrews insists upon, in order to explain, clear up, and confirm the safety of the way of salvation through his blood. *Heb.* i. To clear up and confirm the safety of the way of salvation, through the blood of Christ, is evidently the scope and design of that epistle, as is manifest from the ten first *chapters;* particularly see *chapter* x. *ver.* 19—22. And in order to show the safety of this way, he insists upon the excellency of his person, and the nature of his office; his being called, appointed, and authorized, and his actually going through the work of our redemption; which, together with some occasional exhortations, digressions, &c. is the substance of this discourse, from *chap.* i. *ver.* 1. to *chap.* x. *ver.* 23.

Thus, as GOD, he was of infinite dignity and worth ; as GOD, he was at liberty to undertake. He had an estate, (if I may so speak,) of his own, and could pay the debt of another with what was his own, and purchase for us an inheritance. And I may add, that, as he was the *Son of God,* the *second* person in the trinity, there was a suitableness that he, rather than either

of the other persons, should be appointed to this work. The *Father* sustains the character of Supreme Lord and Governor: asserts the rights of the Godhead: maintains the honour of his law and government. The *Son* becomes mediator between God and man, to open a door for God to show mercy to man consistently with his honour, and for man to return to God with safety. The *Holy Spirit* is the sanctifier, to work in sinners to will and to do, and recover and bring them to repent and return to God, through Jesus Christ. Thus the gospel teaches us to believe. *Eph.* ii. 18.

He also was *made flesh, and dwelt among us,* and for our sakes, was *made under the law,* to the end that, in our nature, he might *fulfil all righteousness,* and *bear the curse.* As he was one with the *father,* he was fit to be intrusted with his *father's* honour. As he was *Immanuel,* God with us, he was fit to be intrusted with our salvation. As he was *God-man,* he was fit to be a *mediator* between God and man. His *humanity* rendered him capable to appear in *the form of a servant,* and to become *obedient unto death:* and his *divinity* rendered his obedience and suffering sufficient to answer the ends designed. This is he of whom the text speaks, *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son.* He *gave* him: he appointed him to the work: he put him into the office: he anointed him, and then he *laid on him the iniquities of us all,* and *set him forth to be a propitiation.* Which brings me to consider,

(2.) *That he was sufficiently authorized to be a mediator between God and man:* to take the place of sinners, and to obey and die in the room of a guilty world. God, the supreme Governor of the world, had sufficient power and authority to appoint the *first* Adam to be a representative for his posterity, to act in their room; and, by the same authority, he has appointed his Son, the *second* Adam, to be a second public head. *Rom.* v. 12—19. By divine constitution, the *first* Adam was made a public person; and, by the divine constitution, the *second* Adam is made such too: both receive all their authority to act in that capacity from the constitution of God. The calling, appointment, and authority of Christ, to take upon him this office and work of a mediator and high priest, is par-

ticularly treated of in the *fifth Chapter* to the *Hebrews*. He was *called of God, as was Aaron*, (ver. 4.) He took not this high office upon himself, but was invested with it by his Father, (*ver.* 5.) He was *called of God an high priest, after the order of Melchizedec*, (ver. 10.) His Father proposed the office and the work, and he willingly undertook. *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.* Heb. x. 7. *God so loved the world, that he* GAVE *his only begotten Son.* John iii. 16. And hence Christ says, *He did not come of himself, but was sent of his Father.* John vii. 28, 29. And that *he did not come to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him.* John vi. 38. And his Father acknowledges him as such by a voice from heaven, Mat. xvii. 5. *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.*

Without such a divine constitution, the death of Christ could have been of no benefit to mankind. As if an innocent man should offer to die in the room of a condemned criminal, and should actually lay down his life, yet it could be of no benefit to the poor criminal, unless the civil government had authorized him so to do, i. e. unless, by some act, they had declared that his life should be accepted, in the eye of the law, instead of the criminal's. The application is easy. Thus Christ was called and put into his mediatorial office, and authorized to the work by God, the supreme Governor of the world. And hence in allusion to the Jewish custom of *anointing* men, when advanced to some high office and important trust; (so Aaron was *anointed* priest, and David was *anointed* king,) in allusion, I say, to this, he is called CHRIST, which is, by interpretation, the ANOINTED. Thus, as to his personal dignity, he was sufficient to undertake; and thus was he authorized to do so. And,

(3.) *What he has done is perfectly suited, in its own nature, to answer all the ends proposed.* That is, to secure the honour of God; the honour of his holiness, justice, and truth; his law, government, and sacred authority; and so open a door for the free and honourable exercise of his mercy and grace towards a sinful, guilty world, and a way in which sinners might return to God with divine acceptance. God, the supreme Governor of the world, knew upon what grounds there was

need of a mediator; what ends he had to answer, and how they might be answered in the best manner. According to the counsel of his own will, in his infinite wisdom, he laid the very plan which is now revealed to us in the gospel. He appointed one to be a mediator whom he judged fit; put him into the office, and appointed him his work; all this work Jesus Christ has done. He has *finished the work which the Father gave him to do.* John xvii. 4. xix. 30. And so has been *faithful to him that appointed him.* Heb. iii. 2. So that herefrom we might be assured, that what he has done is most perfectly suited, in its own nature, to answer all the ends proposed, although it were quite beyond us to understand *how.* But, by the help of the word and spirit of God, we may be able to enter a little way into this wonderful and glorious mystery.

It was fit the *first* Adam, as the representative and public head of mankind, should, as a condition of the everlasting love and favour of God, have continued in a most willing and perfect subjection to God, the Governor of the world, valuing his honour and glory above all things; this was God's due. This would have satisfied God's holiness; for holiness is satisfied when the thing which is right and fit is done: holiness wants no more, but is then content and well-pleased; and, upon this condition, mankind might have been considered as subjects fit for the divine favour, and might have received the promised reward, to the honour of the divine holiness and goodness. Now Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has, by his Father's appointment and approbation, assumed our nature; taken Adam's place; done that which was Adam's duty in our room and stead, as another public head; obeyed the law God gave his creature; a law which he was not under, but in consequence of his undertaking to stand in our room and stead. The creature fails of paying that honour to the Governor of the world which is his due from the creature. A God lays aside his glory; appears in the form of a servant, and becomes obedient; and so, in the creature's stead and behalf, pays that honour to the Governor of the world which was the creature's duty: and thus the Governor of the world is considered, respected, treated, and honoured, as being what he is, by man—i. e. by their representative Christ

Jesus, God-man-mediator. And now, hereby, God's right to the obedience of his creatures, and their unworthiness of his favour upon any other condition, are publicly owned and acknowledged: the debt is owned, and the debt is paid by the Son of God; and so holiness is satisfied; for holiness is satisfied when the thing that is right and fit is done. And now, this door being opened, mankind may, through Christ, be considered as subjects to whom God may show favour consistently with his honour: yea, the divine holiness may be honoured by granting all favours as a reward to Christ's virtue and obedience.

Again, it was fit, if any intelligent creature should at any time swerve at all from the perfect will of God, that he should for ever lose his favour, and fall under his everlasting displeasure, for a thing so infinitely wrong. And in such a case it was fit the Governor of the world should be infinitely displeased, and publicly testify his infinite displeasure, by a punishment adequate thereto, inflicted on the sinning creature. This would satisfy justice; for justice is satisfied, when the thing which is wrong is punished according to its desert. Hence it was fit when, by a constitution, holy, just, and good, Adam was made a public head, to represent his race, and act not only for himself, but for all his posterity; it was fit, I say, that he and all his race, for his first transgression, should lose the favour, and fall under the everlasting displeasure, of the Almighty. It was fit that God should be infinitely displeased at so abominable a thing; and that, as Governor of the world, he should publicly bear testimony against it, as an infinite evil, by inflicting the infinite punishment the law threatened, i. e. by damning the whole world. This would have satisfied justice: for justice is satisfied when justice takes place; when the guilty are treated with that severity they ought to be: when sin is punished as being what it is. Now, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has, by his Father's appointment and approbation, assumed our nature; taken the place of a gulity world; and had not only Adam's first transgression, but the iniquities of us all laid upon him; and, in our room and stead, has suffered the wrath of God, the curse of the law, offering up himself a sacrifice to God for the sins of men. And hereby the infinite

evil of sin, and the righteousness of the law, are publicly owned and acknowledged, and the deserved punishment voluntarily submitted unto by man, i. e. by their representative. And thus justice is satisfied; for justice is satisfied when justice takes place. And sin is now treated as being what it is, as much as if God had damned the whole world; and God, as Governor, appears as severe against it. And thus the righteousness of God is declared and manifested, by Christ's being set forth to be a propitiation for sin; and he may now be just, and yet justify him that believes in Jesus.

By all this the law is magnified and made honourable. On the one hand, Were any in all God's dominions tempted to think that the great Governor of the world had dealt too severely with man, in suspending his everlasting welfare upon the condition of perfect obedience? God practically answers, and says, "I did as well by mankind as I should desire to have been done by myself, had I been in their case, and they in mine; for when my Son, who is as myself, came to stand in their stead, I required the same condition of him." And what the Father says, the Son confirms: he practically owns the law to be holy, just, and good, and the debt to be due, and pays it most willingly to the last mite, without any objection; which was as if he had said, "There was all the reason in the world that the everlasting welfare of mankind should be suspended on that condition; nor could I have desired it to have been otherwise, had I myself been in their case." On the other hand, Were any tempted to think that God had been too severe in threatening everlasting damnation for sin? Here this point is also cleared up. God the Father practically says, that he did as he would have been done by, had he been in their case, and they in his; for when his Son, his second self, comes to stand in their place, he abates nothing, but appears as great an enemy to sin, in his conduct, as if he had damned the whole world. His Son also owns the sentence just; he takes the cup and drinks it off. Considering the infinite dignity of his person, his sufferings were equivalent to the eternal damnation of such worms as we.

Thus the law is magnified and made honourable; and, at the same time, the honour of God's government and sacred

authority is secured: and, I may add, so is also the honour of his *truth*; for he has been *true* to his threatening, *In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*: for on that very day the *second Adam* virtually laid down his life in the room and stead of a guilty world. He is the *lamb slain from the foundation of the world*. So that now there is no room left, for those who will view things impartially, to have undue thoughts of the Governor of the world; nor any thing done to expose his government to reproach, or his authority to contempt. The honour of the divine government and authority appears as sacred and tremendous as if he had damned the whole world; and although sinners will take occasion to sin, and be encouraged in their ways, because grace abounds, yet the Governor of the world has not given the occasion. In his conduct, the whole of it considered, he appears as severe against sin as if he had damned the whole world, without any mixture of the least mercy. The infinite dignity of his Son causes those sufferings he bore in our room to be as bright a display of the divine holiness and justice, as if all the human race had, for their sin, been cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, and the smoke of their torments ascended for ever and ever.

Moreover, by all this, a way is opened for the free and honourable exercise of mercy and grace towards a sinful, guilty world. It may be done consistently with the honour of God, of his holiness and justice, his law and government, his truth and sacred authority: for the honour of all these is effectually secured. It may be done to the honour of divine grace: for now it appears that God did not pity the world under a notion that they had been by him severely and hardly dealt with, nor under a notion that it would have been too severe to have proceeded against them according to law. The law is not made void, but established. No reflections are cast upon the divine government. And grace appears to be free, taking its rise, not from any thing in us, but merely from self-moving goodness and sovereign mercy. This way of salvation is suited to set off the grace of God to advantage, and make it appear to be what it is.

Having thus finished the work assigned him, he arose from the dead, he ascended on high, he entered into the holy of

holies, into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for us, as our great high priest. *Heb.* ix. And here, as God-man-mediator, he is exalted to the highest honour, has a name above every name, sits on the right hand of the Majesty on high, having all power in heaven and earth committed unto him, and ever lives to make intercession, and is able to save, to the uttermost, all that come to God through him. Such is the virtue of his righteousness and blood, and such is his honour and interest in the court of heaven, and such is his faithfulness to all that believe in him, that now it is perfectly safe to return to God through him, and venture our *everlasting* ALL upon his worth and merits, mediation and intercession. Heb. iv. 16. *Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace.*

Thus we see what necessity there was of satisfaction for sin, and that the demands of the law should be answered. And thus we see what has been done for these purposes, and its sufficiency to answer all the ends proposed. The Mediator was of sufficient dignity, as to his person; he had sufficient authority, as to his office; and he has faithfully done his work. And now the honour of God's holiness and justice, law and government, and sacred authority, is secured; and a way is opened in which he may honourably put his designs of mercy into execution, and sinners safely return unto him. And now, before I proceed to consider more particularly what way is opened and what methods God has entered upon for the recovery of sinful, guilty creatures to himself, I shall make a few *remarks* upon what has been said.

REM. 1. *As the law is a transcript of the divine nature, so also is the gospel.* The law is holy, just, and good; and is, as it were, the image of the holiness, justice, and goodness of God; and so also is the gospel. The law insists upon God's honour from the creature, and ordains that his everlasting welfare shall be suspended upon that condition; and the gospel says amen to it. The law insists upon it, that it is an infinite evil for the creature to swerve in the least from the most perfect will of God, and that it deserves an infinite punishment; and the gospel says amen to it. The law discovered the infinite goodness of God, in its being suited to make

the obedient creature perfectly happy; but the gospel still more abundantly displays the infinite goodness and wonderful free grace of God. The law was holy, just, and good, and the image of God's holiness, justice, and goodness; but the gospel is more eminently so. In it the holiness, justice, and goodness of God are painted more to the life, in a manner truly surprising, and beyond our comprehension; yea, to the amazement of angels, who desire to look and pry into this wonderful contrivance. 1 *Pet.* i. 12.

Here, in this glass, the glory of the Lord is to be beheld; 2 *Cor.* iii. 18. The glory of God is to be seen in *the face of Christ.* 2 *Cor.* iv. 6. What has been done by him in this affair, discovers the glorious moral beauty of the divine nature. Much of God is to be seen in the moral law; it is his image: but more of God is to be seen in the gospel; for herein his image is exhibited more to the life, more clearly and conspicuously.

The moral excellence of the moral law sufficiently evidences that it is from God: it is so much like God, that it is evident that it is from God. So the moral excellence of the gospel sufficiently evidences that it is from God: it is so much like him, that it is evident that it is from him: It is his very image; therefore it is his offspring: it is a copy of his moral perfections, and they are the original. It is so much like God, that it is perfectly to his mind; he is pleased with it; he delights to save sinners in this way; and if ever this gospel becomes the power of God to our salvation, it will make us like unto God; it will transform us into his image, and we shall be pleased with this way of salvation, and delight to be saved in such a way; a way wherein God is honoured, the sinner humbled, the law established, sin discountenanced, boasting excluded, and grace glorified.

If any man has a taste for moral excellence, a heart to account God glorious for being what he is, he cannot but see the moral excellence of the law, and love it, and conform to it; because it is the image of God: and so he cannot but see the moral excellence of the gospel, and believe it, and love it, and comply with it; for it is also the image of God. He that can see the moral beauty of the original, cannot but see the

moral beauty of the image drawn to the life: He, therefore, that despises the gospel, and is an enemy to the law, even he is at enmity against God himself. *Rom.* viii. 7. Ignorance of the glory of God, and enmity against him, makes men ignorant of the glory of the law and of the gospel, and enemies to both. Did men know and *love him that begat, they would love that which is begotten of him.* 1 John v. 1. *He that is of God, heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.* John viii. 47.

And therefore a genuine compliance with the gospel supposes that *he who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines in the heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* 2 Cor. iv. 6. And a sight and sense of the moral excellence of the gospel-way of salvation assures the heart of its divinity; and hereby a supernatural and divine assent to the truth of the gospel is begotten in the heart. And a sense of the infinite dignity of the Mediator, and that he was sent of God, and that he has finished the work which was given him to do, and so opened and consecrated a new and living way of access to God: together with a sense of the full and free invitation to sinners to return to God in this way, given in the gospel, and the free grace of God therein discovered, and his readiness to be reconciled; a spiritual sight and sense of these things, I say, emboldens the heart of a humbled sinner to trust in Christ, and to return to God through him. Hence the apostle to the Hebrews, having gone through this subject in a doctrinal way, in the conclusion makes this practical inference: *Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus; by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh: and having a high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith.* Heb. x. 19—22.

Rem. 2. From what has been said, we may observe, that the necessity of satisfaction for sin, and of the preceptive part of the law being answered, takes its rise from the moral perfections of the divine nature, and the moral fitness of things; and therefore a true idea of God and a just sense of the moral fitness of things, will naturally lead us to see the necessity

of satisfaction for sin, &c. and predispose us to understand and believe what is held forth by divine revelation to that purpose. On the other hand, where a true idea of the moral perfections of God, and the moral fitness of things, is not; but, on the contrary, very wrong notions of the divine Being, and of the true nature of things, there will naturally be an indisposition and an aversion to such principles; nor will what the gospel teaches about them be readily understood or believed. And doubtless it was this which originally led some to deny the necessity of satisfaction for sin, and others to go a step further, to deny that Christ ever designed to make any. *John* viii. 47. *He that is of God, heareth God's words; ye, therefore, hear them not, because ye are not of God.*

Rem. 3. The death of Christ was not designed, at all, to take away the evil nature of sin, or its ill deserts; for sin is unalterably what it is, and cannot be made a less evil. But the death of Christ was rather, on the contrary, to acknowledge and manifest the evil nature and ill desert of sin, to the end that pardoning mercy might not make it seem to be a less evil than it really is. So that, although God may freely pardon all our sins, and entitle us to eternal life for Christ's sake, yet he does look upon us, considered merely as in ourselves, to be as much to blame as ever, and to deserve hell as much as ever; and therefore we are always to look upon ourselves so too. And hence we ought always to live under a sense of the freeness and riches of God's grace in pardoning our sins, and under a sense of our own vileness and ill desert, in ourselves, upon the account of them, although pardoned. *That thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.*—Ezek. xvi. 63. But this is not the way of hypocrites: for being once confident that their sins are pardoned, their shame, sorrow, and abasement are soon at an end: and having no fear of hell, they have but little sense of sin: and, from the doctrine of free grace, they are emboldened, as it were, to sin upon free cost. But thus saith the Lord, *When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall*

not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it. Ezek. xxxiii. 13.

REM. 4. Nor was the death of Christ designed to draw forth the pity of God towards a guilty world: for God could find it in his heart, of his mere goodness, without any motive from without, to give his only begotten Son to die for sinners. But this was greater goodness than it would have been to have saved mankind by an act of sovereign grace, without any mediator; it was a more expensive way. As, for an earthly sovereign to give his only son to die for a traitor, that the traitor might live, would be a greater act of goodness than to pardon the traitor, of mere sovereignty. It was not, therefore, because the goodness of the divine nature needed any motive to draw it forth into exercise, that Jesus Christ obeyed, and died in our room; but it was to answer the ends of moral government, and to secure the honour of the moral Governor; and so open a way for the honourable exercise of the divine goodness, which, in its own nature, is infinite, free, and self-moving, and wants no motive from without to draw it forth into action. And the same, no doubt, may be said of Christ's *intercession in heaven.* We are, therefore, in our approaches to God, not to look to Christ to persuade the Father to pity and pardon us, as though he was not willing to show mercy of his own accord; but we are to look to Christ, and go to God through him, for all we want, under a sense that we are, in ourselves, too bad to be pitied without some sufficient *salvo* to the divine honour, or to have any mercy shown us. And, therefore, when we look to be justified by *free grace,* it must be only through the *redemption* that is in Jesus Christ; who has been *set forth to be a propitiation for sin, to declare God's righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.* Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26.

REM. 5. Some of the peculiar principles of the *Antinomians* seem to take their rise from wrong notions of the nature of satisfaction for sin. They seem to have no right notions of the moral perfections of God, and of the natural obligations we are under to him, nor any right apprehensions of the nature and ends of moral government, nor any ideas of the grounds, nature, and ends of satisfaction for sin; (a right

sense of which things tends powerfully to promote a holy fear, and reverential awe of the dread Majesty of heaven and earth: a sense of the infinite evil of sin; brokenness of heart, tenderness of conscience; a humble, holy, watchful, prayerful temper and life, as well as to prepare the way for faith in the blood of Christ.) But they seem to have no right apprehensions of these things. They seem to consider God *merely* under the notion of a *creditor*, and us *merely* under the notion of *debtors*; and to suppose, when Christ upon the cross said, *It is finished*, he then paid the whole debt of the elect, and saw the book crossed, whereby all their sins were *actually* blotted out and forgiven: and now, all that remains is for the Holy Spirit immediately to reveal it to one and another that he is elected; that for him Christ died, and that his sins are all pardoned; which revelation he is firmly to believe, and never again to doubt of; and this they call *faith*. From which it seems they understand nothing rightly about God or Christ, the law or gospel. For nothing is more evident than that God is, in scripture, considered as *righteous Governor* of the world, and we as *criminals*, guilty before him; and the evident design of Christ's death was, to be a *propitiation for sin*, to declare and manifest God's righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. *Rom.* iii. 9—26. And the gospel knows nothing about a sinner's being justified in any other way than *by faith*, and by consequence, in order of nature, not till *after faith*. The gospel knows nothing about satisfaction for sin, in their sense; but every where teaches that the *elect*, as well as others, are equally *under condemnation* and the *wrath of God*: yea, are *children of wrath* while unbelievers. *John* iii. 18. 36. *Eph.* ii. 3. *Acts* iii. 19.

Again; while they consider God *merely* under the character of a *creditor*, and us *merely* as *debtors*, and Christ as paying the *whole debt* of the elect; now, because Christ obeyed the law, as well as suffered its penalty, therefore they seem to think that Christ has done all *their duty*, so that now they have nothing to do but firmly to *believe* that Christ has done *all*: they have nothing to do with the *law*; no, not so much as to be their rule to live by; but are set at full liberty from all obligations to *any duty* whatsoever; not understanding

that *Christ gave himself to redeem his people from all iniquity, and purify them to himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works,* (Tit. ii. 14.) and not understanding that our natural obligations to perfect obedience are not capable of being dissolved, (*Mat.* v. 17.) and not understanding that our obligations to all holy living are mightily increased by the grace of the gospel. (*Rom.* xii. 1.) Indeed, they seem to understand nothing rightly, but to view every thing in a wrong light; and, instead of considering Christ as a friend to holiness; as one *that loves righteousness and hates iniquity,* (Heb. i. 9.) they make him *a minister of sin,* (Gal. ii. 17.) and turn the grace of God into wantonness. All their notions tend to render their consciences insensible of the evil of sin; to cherish spiritual pride and carnal security, and to open a door to all ungodliness.

SECTION V.

SHOWING A DOOR OF MERCY IS OPENED BY JESUS CHRIST FOR A GUILTY WORLD.

I come now to another thing proposed, *viz.*

III. To show more particularly *what way to life has been opened, by what Christ, our mediator, has done and suffered.*

In general, from what has been said, we may see that the mighty bar which lay in the way of mercy is removed by Jesus Christ; and now a door is opened, and a way provided, wherein the great Governor of the world may, consistently with the honour of his holiness and justice; his law and government, and sacred authority, and to the glory of his grace, put in execution all his designs of mercy towards a sinful, guilty, undone world. But to be more particular,

(1.) *A way is opened, wherein the great Governor of the world may, consistently with his honour, and to the glory of his grace, pardon, and receive to favour, and entitle to eternal life, all and every one of the human race, who shall cordially fall in with the gospel-design; believe in Christ, and return home to God through him.*

What Christ has done, is, in fact, *sufficient* to open a door for God, through him, to become *reconcileable* to the whole world. The *sufferings* of Christ, all things considered, have as much displayed God's hatred of sin, and as much secured the honour of his law, as if the whole world had been damned; as none will deny, who believe the infinite dignity of his divine nature. God may now, therefore, through Jesus Christ, stand ready to pardon the whole world. There is nothing in the way. And the *obedience* of Christ has brought as much honour to God, and to his law, as the perfect obedience of Adam, and of all his race, would have done: the rights of the Godhead are as much asserted and maintained. So that there is nothing in the way, but that mankind may, through Christ, be received into full favour, and entitled to eternal life. God may stand ready to do it, consistently with his honour. What Christ has done is every way sufficient. Mat. xxii. 4. *All things are now ready.*

And God has expressly declared that it was the *design* of Christ's death, to open this door of mercy to *all;* John iii. 16. *God so loved the* WORLD, *that he gave his only begotten Son, that* WHOSOEVER *believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* That *whosoever,* of *all mankind,* whether Jew or Greek, bond or free, rich or poor, without any exception, though the chief of sinners, *that believes, should be saved;* For this *end,* God gave his only begotten Son. *He set him forth to be a propitiation for sin, that he might be just, and the justifier of him,* (without any exception, let *him* be who he will,) *that believeth in Jesus.* Rom. iii. 25, 26.

Hence, the apostles received an universal commission. Mat. xxviii. 19. *Go, teach* ALL NATIONS. Mark xvi. 15, 16. *Go ye into* ALL *the world, and preach the gospel to* EVERY CREATURE. Accordingly, the apostles proclaimed the news of pardon, and peace to *every one;* offered mercy to *all* without exception, and invited *all* without distinction. *He that believeth shall be saved; Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out,* were declarations they made to all in general. To the Jewish nations they were sent to say, in the name of the King of heaven, *I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready;*

come unto the marriage. Mat. xxii. 4. And as to the Gentile nations, their orders ran thus, *Go ye, therefore: into the highways, and as many as ye find, bid to the marriage,* (ver. 9.) To the Jewish nation God had been used to send his servants the prophets, in the days of old, saying, *Turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die?* Ezek. xxxiii. 11. *Ho, every one that thirsteth come.* Isa. lv. 1. *Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live,* (ver. 3.) And now orders are given that the whole world be invited to a reconciliation to God through Christ. *Whosoever will, let him come; and he that cometh shall in no wise be cast out.* Thus Christ has opened a door; and thus, the great Governor of the world may, consistently with his honour, be reconciled to any that believe and repent. And thus he actually stands ready.

And now, *all things* being thus *ready* on God's side, and the offers, invitations, and calls of the gospel being to every one, without exception; hence, it is attributed to sinners themselves that they perish at last; even to their own voluntary conduct. *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.* John v. 40. and they are considered as being perfectly inexcusable. John xv. 22. *Now they have no cloak for their sin.* And all because a way is opened, in which they might be delivered from condemnation; but they will not comply therewith. John iii. 19. *This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.* And therefore, in scripture-account, they stand exposed to a more aggravated punishment in the world to come. Mat. xi. 20. 24. *Wo unto thee,* Chorazin, *wo unto thee,* Bethsaida, &c. *And thou,* Capernaum, *which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell,* &c. *It shall be more tolerable for Tyre, and Sidon, and Sodom, in the day of judgment,* than for these cities; *because they repented not.*

And now, because the door of mercy is thus opened to the *whole world* by the blood of Christ, therefore, in scripture, he is called *the Saviour of the* WORLD. 1 John iv. 14. *The Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the* WORLD. John i. 29. *A propitiation for the sins of the* WHOLE WORLD.—1 John ii. 2. *That gave himself a ransom for* ALL. 1

Tim. ii. 6. And *tasted death for* EVERY MAN. Heb. ii. 9. The plain sense of all which expressions may, I think, without any danger of mistake, be learnt from John iii. 16. *God so loved the* WORLD, *that he gave his only begotten Son, that* WHOSOEVER *believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life**. And indeed, was not the door of mercy opened to *all*, indefinitely, how could God *sincerely* offer mercy to *all*? Or *heartily* invite *all*? Or *justly* blame those who do not accept? Or *righteously* punish them for *neglecting so great salvation*?

Besides, if Christ died merely for the *elect*, that is, to the intent that they, only upon believing, might, consistently with the divine honour, be received to favour, then God could not, consistently with his justice, save any besides, if they should believe: *For without shedding of blood, there can be no remission.* Heb. ix. 22. If Christ did not design, by his death, to open a door for all to be saved conditionally, i. e. upon the condition of faith, then there is no such door opened: the door is not opened wider than Christ designed it should be; there is nothing more purchased by his death than he intended: if this benefit was not intended, then it is not procured; if it be not procured, then the non-elect cannot any of them be saved, consistently with divine justice. And, by consequence, if this be the case, then, (1.) *The non-elect have no right at all to take any, the least encouragement, from the death of Christ, or the invitations of the gospel, to return to God through Christ, in hopes of acceptance;* for there are no grounds of encouragement given. Christ did not die for them in any sense. It is impossible their sins should be par-

* "I am ready to profess," says the famous Doctor TWISSE, "and that, I suppose, as out of the mouths of all our divines, that every one who hears the gospel, (without distinction between elect or reprobate,) is bound to believe that Christ died for him, so far as to procure both the pardon of his sins and the salvation of his soul, in case he believes and repents." Again, "As *Peter* could not have been saved, unless he had believed and repented, so *Judas* might have been saved, if he had done so." Again, "*John* iii. 16. gives a fair light of exposition to those places where Christ is said to have *died for the sins of the world*; yea, *of the whole world*, to wit, in this manner; that *whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*" Dr. TWISSE on *the riches of God's love to the vessels of mercy*, &c.

doned, consistently with justice; as much impossible as if there had never been a Saviour: as if Christ had never died; and so there is no encouragement at all for them: and therefore it would be presumption in them to take any; all which is apparently contrary to the whole tenour of the gospel, which every where invites all, and gives equal encouragement to all. *Come, for all things are ready,* said Christ to the reprobate Jews. *Mat.* xxii. 4. And if the non-elect have no right to take any encouragement from the death of Christ, and the invitations of the gospel, to return to God through him, in hopes of acceptance, then, (2.) *No man at all can rationally take any encouragement until he knows that he is elected;* because, until then, he cannot know that there is any ground for encouragement. It is not rational to take encouragement before we see sufficient grounds for it; yea, it is presumption to do so. But no man can see sufficient grounds of encouragement to trust in Christ, and to return to God through him, in hopes of acceptance, unless he sees that God may, through Christ, consistently with his honour, accept and save him, and is willing so to do. If God can, and is actually willing to save any that come, then there is no objection. I may come, and any may come; *all things are ready: there is bread enough, and to spare.* But if God is reconcileable only to the elect, then I may not come. I dare not come: it would be presumption to come till I know that I am elected. And how can I know that? Why, not by any thing in all the Bible. While an unbeliever, it is impossible I should know it by any thing in scripture. It is no where said, in express words, that I, by name, am elected, and there are no rules of trial laid down in such a case. And how can I, therefore, in this case, ever know that I am elected, but by an immediate revelation from heaven? And how shall I know that this revelation is true? How shall I dare to venture my soul upon it? The gospel does not teach me to look for any such revelation, nor give any marks whereby I may know when it is from God, and when from the devil. Thus, an invincible bar is laid in my way to life. I must know that I am one of the elect, before I can see any encouragement to believe in Christ; because none but the elect have any more business to do so than the devils; but if

I am one of the elect, yet it is impossible I should know it till afterwards, besides, all this is contrary to the whole tenour of the gospel: *Whosoever will, let him come; whosoever comes, shall in no wise be cast out: whosoever believes shall be saved.* And contrary to the experience of all true believers, who, in their first return to God through Christ, always take all their encouragement from the gospel, and lay the weight of their souls upon the truth of that; and venture their eternal *all* upon this bottom, and not upon the truth of any new revelation. They venture their all upon the truths already revealed in the gospel, and not upon the truth of any proposition not revealed there.

So that, let us view this point in what light we will, nothing is more clear and certain than that Christ died, *that* WHOSOEVER *believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* And God may now *be just*, and yet *justify* any of the race of Adam that believe in Jesus: and he stands ready to do so. And these things being true, the servants, upon good grounds, might, in their master's name, tell the obstinate Jews, who did not belong to the election of grace, and who finally refused to hearken to the calls of the gospel, *Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.* Mat. xxii. 4. And if they had come, they would have been heartily welcome: the provision made was sufficient, and the invitation sincere. Jesus wept over them, saying, *O that thou hadst known, in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace!* So that there was nothing to hinder, had they but been willing. But it seems they were otherwise disposed; and therefore *they made light of it, and went their ways: one to his farm, another to his merchandise; and the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them,* (ver. 5, 6.) And in this glass we may see the very nature of all mankind, and how all would actually do if not prevented by divine grace. Justly, therefore, at the day of judgment, will *this be the condemnation, that light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than light.* For certainly, if mankind are so perversely bad, that, notwithstanding their natural obligations to God, and the unreasonableness of their original apostacy, they will yet persist

in their rebellion; and, after all the glorious provision and kind invitations of the gospel, will not return to God through Christ; I say, certainly, God is not obliged to come out after them, and, by his all-conquering grace, irresistibly reclaim them; but may justly let every man take his own course, and run his own ruin. And an aggravated damnation will every such person deserve in the coming world, *for neglecting so great salvation.* Heb. ii. 2, 3.

And now, if Christ's atonement and merits be thus sufficient for all; and if God stands ready to be reconciled to all: and if all are invited to return and come; hence, then, we may learn that it is safe for any of the poor, sinful, guilty, lost, undone race of Adam to return to God in this way. They shall surely find acceptance with God: they may come *without money, without price; and he that cometh shall in no wise be cast out.*

And hence we may see upon what grounds it is, that the poor, convinced, humbled sinner is encouraged and emboldened to venture his *all* upon Christ, and return to God through him. It is because any poor, sinful, guilty, hell-deserving wretch, may come; any in the world; the worst in the world; the vilest, and most odious and despicable: for such he actually takes himself to be. And if he did not see that there was an open door for such, for any such, for all such, he would doubt, and that with good reason too, whether he might safely come. But when he understands and believes the gospel-revelation, and so is assured that it is safe for any, for all, the vilest and the worst; now the peculiar vileness and unworthiness which he sees in himself ceases to be an objection. He sees it safe for any, and therefore for him; and hence takes courage, and is emboldened to venture his *all* upon the free grace of God, through Jesus Christ; and so returns in hopes of acceptance. Now, does this poor sinner venture upon a safe foundation, or does he not? He takes it for granted that the supreme Governor of the world can, consistently with his honour, show mercy to any that come to him through Christ; and he takes it for granted that he stands ready to do so, even to the vilest and worst; that the door of mercy stands wide open, and *whosoever will may come.* And, upon these principles, he takes encouragement to return to

God, in hopes of acceptance: and, from a sense of his own wants, and of the glory and all-sufficiency of the divine nature; of the blessedness there is in being the Lord's, devoted to him, and living upon him, he does return with all his heart; and to God he gives himself, to be for ever his: and if the gospel be true, surely he must be safe. The *truth of the gospel* is the foundation of all; for upon that, and that only, he builds: not upon works of righteousness which he has done; not upon any immediate revelation of pardon, or the love of Christ to him in particular; but merely upon gospel-principles. If they, therefore, prove true, in the coming world, then will he receive the end of his faith; the salvation of his soul. But to return:

Thus we see that, by the death of Christ, there is a wide door opened for divine mercy to exercise and display itself: the supreme Governor of the world may, consistently with his honour, now seat himself upon a throne of grace, and proclaim the news of pardon and peace through a guilty world; and it is perfectly safe for any of the guilty race of Adam to return unto him through Jesus Christ. And now, were mankind in a disposition to be heartily sorry for their apostacy from God, and disposed to esteem it their indispensable duty, and highest blessedness, to return; were this the case, the joyful news of a Saviour, and of pardon and peace through him, would fly through the world like lightning, and every heart would be melted with love, and sorrow, and gratitude; and all the nations of the earth would come, and fall down in the dust before the Lord, and bless his holy name, and devote themselves to him for ever, lamenting, in the bitterness of their hearts, that ever they did break away from their subjection to such a God. And were mankind sensible of their sinful, guilty, undone state by LAW, and disposed to justify the law, and condemn themselves; and were they sensible of the holiness and justice of the great Governor of the world, they would soon see their need of such a mediator as Christ Jesus, and soon see the wonderful grace of the gospel, and soon see the glory of this way of salvation, and so know it to be from God, believe it, and fall in with it; and all the world would repent and convert of their own accord; and so all the world

might be saved without any more to do. But, instead of this, such is the temper of mankind, that there is not one in the world, that, of his own accord, is disposed to have any such regard to God, or sorrow for his apostacy, or inclination to repent and return; nor do men once imagine that they are in a state so wretched and undone, and stand in such a perishing need of Christ and free grace; and therefore, they are ready to make light of the glad tidings of the gospel, and go their ways; one to his farm, another to his merchandise: nor is there one of all the human race disposed, of his own accord, to lay down the weapons of his rebellion, and return to God by Jesus Christ. So that all will come to nothing, and not one be ever brought home to God, unless something further be done; unless some methods, and methods very effectual, be used.

But that God should come out after such an apostate race, who, without any grounds, have turned enemies to him, and, without any reason, refuse to be reconciled; and that after all the glorious provision and kind invitations of the gospel; that God, I say, should come out after such, and reclaim them by his own sovereign and all-conquering grace, might seem to be going counter to the holiness and justice of his nature, and to tend to expose his law, and government, and sacred authority, to contempt; inasmuch as they so eminently deserve to be consumed by the fire of his wrath. Therefore,

(2.) *Jesus Christ did, by his obedience and death, open such a door of mercy, as that the supreme Governor of the world might, consistently with his honour, take what methods he pleased, in order to recover rebellious, guilty, stubborn sinners to himself.*

That he might take *what methods he pleased*, I say; for he knew, from the days of eternity, how mankind would be disposed to treat him, his Son, and his grace; and he knew, from eternity, what methods he *intended* to take to reclaim them: and these are the methods which he now *pleases* to take; and the methods, yea, the *only* methods which he *actually does take*. So that it is the same thing, in effect, to say that, by what Christ has done and suffered, a door is opened for the MOST HIGH, consistently with his honour, to take, 1.

What methods he *actually does take*; or, 2. What methods he *pleases*; or, 3. What methods he, *from eternity, intended*; for all amount to just one and the same thing: for what pleased him from eternity, the same pleases him now; and what pleases him now, that he actually does. The infinite perfection of his nature does not admit of any new apprehension, or alteration of judgment. By his infinite understanding he always had, and has, and will have, a complete view of all things, past, present, and to come, at once. And by his infinite wisdom, and the perfect rectitude of his nature, he unchangeably sees and determines upon that conduct which is right, and fit, and best. For with him *there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning.* James i. 17.

Now, that what Christ has done and suffered, was *sufficient* to open a way for the honourable exercise of his sovereign grace, in recovering sinners to himself, is evident, from what has been heretofore observed. And that it was *designed* for this end, and has, in fact, effectually answered it, is plain, from God's conduct in the affair: for otherwise he could not, consistently with his honour, or the honour of his law, use those means to reclaim sinners which he actually does. For all those methods of grace would else be contrary to LAW, which does not allow the sinner to have any favour shown him, without a sufficient security to the divine honour, as has been before proved. The law, therefore, has been satisfied in this respect, or these favours could not be shown. For heaven and earth shall sooner pass away, than the law be disregarded in any one point. It follows, therefore, that not only special and saving grace, but also that all the common favours which mankind in general enjoy, and that all the means of grace which are common to the elect and non-elect, are the effects of Christ's merits. All were purchased by him; none of these things could have been granted to mankind, but for him. Christ has opened the door, and an infinite sovereign goodness has strewed these common mercies round the world. All those particulars wherein mankind are treated better than the damned in hell, are over and above what mere LAW would allow of, and therefore are the effects of Christ's merits and gospel-grace. And for this, among other reasons, Christ is called *the Saviour of the world.*

And hence, also, God is said to be *reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.* 2 Cor. v. 19. Because, for the present, their punishment is suspended, and they are treated in a way of mercy; are invited to repentance, and have the offers of pardon, and peace, and eternal life made unto them: hence, I say, God is said *not to impute their sins unto them;* agreeably with that parallel place in *Psalm* lxxviii. 38, where God is said *to forgive the iniquity* of his people, because he *destroyed them not.*

Upon the whole, then, this seems to be the true state of the case; God is through Christ ready to be reconciled to all and every one that will repent and return unto him through Jesus Christ. He sends the news of pardon and peace around a guilty world, and invites every one to come, saying, *He that believeth, shall be saved; and he that believeth not, shall be damned:* and, on this account, it is said that *he will have all men to be saved,* and *is not willing that any should perish;* because he offers salvation to all, and uses arguments to dissuade them from perdition. But, inasmuch as mankind will not hearken, but are obstinately set in their way, therefore he takes state upon himself, and says, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy:* and a sinful, guilty world are in his hands, and he may use what methods of grace with all, that he pleases. Some he may suffer to take their own way, and run their own ruin, if he pleases; and others he may subdue and recover to himself, by his own all-conquering grace. And, unto a certain number, from eternity, he intended to show this special mercy: and these are said to be *given to Christ.* (John vi. 37.) And with a special eye to these *sheep* did he *lay down his life,* (John x. 15.) his Father intending, and he intending, that they, in spite of all opposition, should be brought to eternal life at last: and hence *the elect do* always *obtain.* (Rom. xi 7. compared with John vi. 37.) And here we may learn how to understand those places of scripture which seem to limit Christ's undertaking to a certain number. Mat. i. 21. *Thou shalt call his name* JESUS; *because he shall save* HIS PEOPLE *from their sins.* Eph. v. 23. *He is the head of the* CHURCH; *and he is the Saviour of the* BODY. Ver. 25. *Christ loved the* CHURCH, *and gave himself* FOR IT. Acts xx. 28. *He*

hath purchased his CHURCH *with his own blood.* John x. 15. *I lay down my life for the* SHEEP. There were a certain number which the Father and Son, from all eternity, designed for *vessels of mercy,* to bring to glory. *Rom.* ix. 23. With a view to these, it was promised in the covenant of redemption that Christ should *see of the travail of his soul.* Isai. liii. 11. And Christ says, in John vi. 37, 38, 39. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.* See, also, Tit. ii. 14. Rev. v. 9, 10. Eph. i. 4, 5, 6.

Thus Christ's merits are sufficient for all the world, and the door of mercy is opened wide enough for all the world; and God, the supreme Governor, has proclaimed himself reconcileable to all the world, if they will believe and repent. And if they will not believe and repent, he is at liberty to have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and to show compassion to whom he will show compassion; according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace. He sits SOVEREIGN, and a rebellious, guilty world, are in his hands and at his disposal; and the thing that seems good in his sight, that he will do: and it is infinitely fit, right, and best he should; that the pride of all flesh may be brought low, and the Lord alone be exalted for ever. And as this view of things seems exactly to harmonize with the whole tenour of the gospel in *general,* and to agree with the various *particular* representations of our redemption by Christ; and to reconcile those texts which seem to speak of an *universal redemption,* with those which seem to speak of a *particular redemption,* so it will naturally suggest an easy answer to any objections which may be made against it.

OBJ. 1. *If Christ has suffered the penalty of the law, not only for the elect, but also for the non-elect, how can it be just that they themselves should be made to suffer it over again for ever in hell?*

Ans. Because Christ did not die with a design to release them from their deserved punishment, but only upon condition of faith; and so they have no right to the release, but upon that condition. It is as just, therefore, they should be punished, as if Christ had never died, since they continue obstinate to the last; and it is just, too, they should have an aggravated damnation, for refusing to return to God, despising the offers of mercy, and neglecting so great salvation. *John* iii. 16—19.

Obj. 2. *If Christ obeyed the preceptive part of the law, not only for the elect, but also for the non-elect, why are not all brought to eternal life, since eternal life is by law promised to perfect obedience?*

Ans. Because Christ did not purchase eternal life for them, but upon the condition of faith. But they would not come to Christ, that they might have life; and therefore they justly perish. *John* iii. 16—19.

Obj. 3. *But for what purpose did Christ die for those who were in hell a long time before his death?*

Ans. And to what purpose did he die for those who were in heaven a long time before his death? The truth is, that when Christ laid down his life a ranson for all, he only accomplished what he undertook at the beginning. Christ actually interposed as Mediator immediately upon the fall of man, and undertook to secure the divine honour, by obeying and suffering in the room of a guilty world; and therefore, through him, God did offer mercy to Cain as well as to Abel, and show common favours to the world in general, as well as grant special grace to the elect; and that before his death, as well as since. Surely none will deny that all the favours which mankind did enjoy prior to Christ's death, were by virtue of his undertaking to be Mediator, and engaging to secure the divine honour: for, upon any other footing, the Governor of the world could not have granted such favours consistently with his honour.

Obj. 4. *But if Christ died for all, then he died in vain, since all are not saved.*

Ans. The next and immediate end of Christ's death was to answer the ends of moral government, and so secure the ho-

nour of the moral Governor, and open a way in which he might honourably declare himself reconcileable to a guilty world upon their returning through Christ, and use means to reclaim them; but this end Christ did obtain; and so did not die in vain. *John* iii. 16. *Rom.* iii. 24, 25, 26. And the supreme Governor of the world will now, through Christ, accomplish all the designs of his heart, to the everlasting honour of his great name.

Obj. 5. *But why would God have a door opened, that he might, consistently with his honour, offer to be reconciled to all that will return to him through Christ, when he knew that the non-elect would never return? And why would he have a door opened that he might use means with them, when he knew all would be in vain, unless he himself recovered them by his all-conquering grace, which yet he never designed to do?*

Ans. God designed to put an apostate world into a new state of probation. Mankind were in a state of probation in Adam, their public head, and we all sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression. But God designed to try the posterity of Adam anew, and see whether they would be sorry for their apostacy, or choose to continue in their rebellion. He would tender mercy, and offer to be reconciled, and call them to return, and use arguments and motives, and promise, and threaten, and try, and see what they would do. He knew mankind would be ready to deny their apostacy, and plead that they were not enemies to God, and think themselves very good-natured; and would take it exceedingly hard not to be believed: therefore he determined to try them, and see what they would do, and make public declaration through the world, that, finally, he would judge every man according to his works, and deal with him according to his conduct. And, in the mean time, that his honour might be secured, he appoints his Son to be Mediator; and so, through him, proclaims the news of pardon and peace, and enters upon the use of means: and now, if you ask me, "Why does he do all this, when he knows it will be in vain, as to the *non-elect*, who will never come to repentance?"

I answer: His knowing that all will, in the event, prove ineffectual to bring them to repentance, is no objection against

his using the means he does: for God does not make his foreknowledge of events the rule of his conduct; but the reason and fitness of things. You may as well inquire, "Why "did God raise up Noah to be a *preacher of righteousness* to "the old world, for the space of an hundred and twenty "years, when he knew they would never come to repentance? "And why did he send all his servants, the prophets, to the "children of Israel, rising early and sending; and, by them, "command and call; entreat and expostulate; promise and "threaten, and say, *As I live, saith the Lord God, I delight "not in the death of a sinner: turn ye, turn ye; why will ye "die!* when he knew they would never come to repentance? "And why did he afterwards send his Son to the same obsti- "nate people, when he knew they would be so far from "hearkening, as that they would rather put him to death?" Now, if you ask me why the great Governor of the world uses such means with the non-elect, and shows so much goodness, patience, forbearance, and long-suffering, instead of sending all immediately to deserved destruction? *I answer*, It is to try them; and to show that he is *the Lord God, gracious and merciful; slow to anger, and abundant in goodness.* It is fit that creatures in a state of probation should be tried, and he loves to act like himself; and he means, in and by his conduct, to do both at once: and after obstinate sinners have long abused that *goodness* and *forbearance*, which *should have led them to repentance;* and have, *after their own hard and impenitent hearts, been treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath*, the righteousness of God's judgment, in their eternal destruction, will be more manifest. And what if God was determined not to reclaim rebels, voluntarily so obstinate, by his all-conquering grace, but let them take their course, seeing they were so set in their way? What then? Was he not at liberty? Was he bound to save them all by an exertion of his omnipotence? Might he not *have mercy on whom he would?* And, after *such long-suffering*, might he not *show his wrath, and make his power known*, in the eternal destruction of those who so justly deserved it? God's last end, no doubt, is to manifest his perfections: and in and by his whole conduct towards a fallen world, they will all be most illustriously *displayed. Rom.* xi. 36.

OBJ. 6. *But considering that the non-elect are, after all, under an absolute impossibility to believe and repent, convert and be saved: and considering that all common mercies, and means of grace, will only render them the more inexcusable in the end, and so aggravate their guilt and damnation; therefore, all things considered, what seeming good they enjoy in this world, is not of the nature of a* MERCY: *it would be better for them to be without it.* Sodom *and* Gomorrah *will be better of it in the day of judgment, than* Chorazin *and* Bethsaida*: *and therefore there is no need to suppose that any thing which the non-elect enjoy in this world, is the effect of Christ's merits, but only of divine sovereignty.*

ANS. What do you mean by being *under an absolute impossibility to believe and repent; convert and be saved?* Using words without determinate ideas, is one principal thing which bewilders the world about matters of religion. Now, in plain English, *all things are ready;* and they are invited to *come;* and there is nothing in the way of their being saved: but, they are not sorry for their apostacy from God, nor will be brought to it by all the means God uses with them. They have not a mind to return to God, nor will they be persuaded by all the most powerful arguments that can be used: they are voluntary enemies to God, and will not be reconciled, unless by an almighty power and all-conquering grace, which God is not obliged to give, and they are infinitely unworthy of; and without which they might return, were they but of such a temper as they ought to be: they are under no inability but what consists in and results from their want of a good temper of mind, and their voluntary obstinacy. Sin has no power over men, but as they are *inclined* to it; and the inclinations of the heart are always voluntary and unforced. Men *love* to be inclined as they are; for otherwise their

* It may be proper just to hint the gross absurdities implied in this objection. If the non-elect were under an absolute, (i. e. not only a moral, but natural,) impossibility to turn to God, they would not be proper subjects to use any means with. And if their common favours, and means of grace were not of the nature of *mercies*, they could not aggravate their guilt: and if it was not their own fault that they did not repent under the enjoyment of means, they would not be to blame, nor deserve to be punished for not repenting. Men stumble into such absurdities by using words without determinate ideas.

inclinations would be so far from having any power over them, that they would even cease to be. Now certainly the bringing up of the children of Israel out of Egypt was of the nature of a *mercy*, and a great mercy too indeed it was, notwithstanding that, through their unbelief and perverseness, they never got to Canaan. The thing, in itself, was as great a mercy to the body of that generation, as it was to Caleb and Joshua: and their bad temper and bad conduct, which prevented their ever coming to the promised land, did not alter the nature of the thing at all, nor lessen their obligations to gratitude to God, their mighty deliverer. And yet, all things considered, it had been better for them to have died in their Egyptian bondage, than to have had their carcasses fall in the wilderness, in such an awful manner. And besides, it is evident that the scriptures do look upon the common favours, and means of grace, which the non-elect enjoy, under the notion of *mercies*; and, (which otherwise could not be,) on this very ground their guilt is aggravated, and they rendered inexcusable, and worthy of a more sore punishment in the world to come. *John* iii. 16—19. xv. 22. 24. *Rom.* ii. 4, 5. *Heb.* ii. 2, 3. And if they are of the nature of mercies, then they are the effects of Christ's merits, as has been already proved.

And hence, by the way, we may see the reason why the *love* and *goodness* of God, in bringing up the children of Israel out of Egypt, is so mightily set forth in the Old Testament, notwithstanding the body of that generation perished in the wilderness; and why the *love* and *goodness* of God, in giving his Son to die for the world, is so mightily set forth in the New Testament, notwithstanding multitudes of mankind perish for ever: viz. It was the Israelites' own fault that they perished in the wilderness, and so it is sinners' own fault that they perish for ever. *John* iii. 19. v. 40. And did they feel it at heart, it would effectually stop their mouths: for this is an undoubted maxim, that the kindnesses of God to a rebellious, perverse world, are not, in themselves, any the less *mercies*, because mankind abuse them to their greater ruin. The kindnesses are, in themselves, the same, whether we make a good improvement of them, or no. They are just the same, and so just as great, let our conduct be what it will. It was

a great mercy to the Israelites to be delivered out of Egypt; it was a wonderful expression of divine goodness: and hence it is said, in Hos. xi. 1. *When Israel was a child, then I* LOVED *him, and called my Son out of Egypt.* (And a like expression we have in Deut. x. 18. *God* LOVETH *the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.*) And on the same ground it is said, in John iii. 16. *God so* LOVED *the world*, &c. because the gift of Christ to die for the world was an infinite expression of divine goodness: and if mankind do generally abuse this goodness, as the Israelites generally did all God's kindnesses to them, yet still the goodness itself is just the same. A dreadful thing, therefore, it is for the non-elect; even as aggravated a piece of wickedness in them as it would be in any body else, to tread under foot the blood of the Son of God, and make light of all the offers of mercy, and neglect so great salvation. And this, above all other things, will be their condemnation in the coming world. *John* iii. 19. Never are the Jews at all excused, any where in the New Testament, in their slighting the offers of mercy by Christ, on this account, that they were not of the elect. And indeed the offers were sincere, and it was entirely their own fault that they did not accept, and they deserved to be treated accordingly. *Mat.* xxii. 1. 7.

OBJ. 7. *But if God so loved the world, the* WHOLE WORLD, *as to give his only begotten Son to die for them, in the sense explained, why does he not go through, and perfect the work, and save the* WHOLE WORLD, *according to that in Rom.* viii. 32.? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

ANS. 1. And why did not the *King*, in *Mat.* xxii. who had made *a marriage for his Son*, and sent his servants to say to them that were bidden, *I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage:* why did not the King, I say, when they refused, *compel them to come in?* Since he had done so much, why did he not go through, and finish the work? And this is directly to the point in hand, because this parable is designed to represent that full provision which is made for

the salvation of sinners by the death of Christ; and it proves that the objection has no force in it. But further;

2. Take your Bible, and read from the 28th verse to the end of the 8th chapter of *Romans*, and you will see what the Apostle's design is, through his whole discourse. "We know," says he, "that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are called according to his purpose. But how do we know it? Why, because God is fully determined to bring them to glory at last. For, whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate; and whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and them he justified, and them he glorified. And God was so fully determined to bring them to glory, and so much engaged in the thing, that he spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; i. e. us, who love God, and are his elect people." (For it is of these, and these only, that he here is speaking.) "And since he was so much engaged as to do this, we may depend upon it that he will also freely give us all things; i. e. us, who love God, and are his elect people. So that never any thing shall hinder our being finally brought to glory, or separate us from the love of God; neither tribulation, nor persecution, nor distress, nor any thing else." So that this is the apostle's argument. Since God was so much *engaged* to bring them to glory who loved God, and were his elect people, as that he had given his own Son *to die for that end*, they therefore, might have the strongest assurance that he would do every thing else which would be needful effectually to bring it about *.

But God never *designed* to bring the non-elect to glory, when he gave his Son to die for the world. He designed to declare himself reconcileable to them through Christ; to of-

* If we leave God's *design* out of the apostle's argument, I cannot see that his reasoning would be conclusive, any more than a like argument would have been conclusive, if we should suppose Moses to have used it with the Israelites at the side of the *Red Sea*. "Since God has now brought you all out of Egypt, and thus divided the Red Sea before you, and drowned your enemies, therefore he will now, without fail, bring you *all* to the promised land." Which reasoning would not have been conclusive; for the body of that generation died in the wilderness, and that in a very awful manner, notwithstanding this glorious deliverance.

fer mercy; to invite them, in common with others, to return; and to assure all that *he that believeth shall be saved*; and to use means with them more or less, according to his pleasure; but finally, they being obstinate, he designed to leave them to themselves, to take their own course, and, in the end, to deal with them according to their deserts. *Mat.* xxiii. 37, 38. and xxii. 1—7. And this being the case, the *objection* from the Apostle's words is evidently groundless.

As to the opinion of the *Arminians*, that God equally designed salvation for all men, purposing to offer salvation to all, and use means with all, and leave all to their own free will, and save those, and those only, who, of their own accord, will become good men; as for this opinion, I say, I think they never learnt it from the Bible: but rather, they seem to have been led into it from a notion that mankind are so good-natured that all might, and that at least some actually would, under the enjoyment of the common means of grace, become good men of their own accord, *i. e.* without any such thing as *special grace*. Convince them that this is an error, and they will soon give up their scheme, and acknowledge their need of sovereign grace, and see the reasonableness and truth of the doctrine of election. Or rather, I may say, convince them, first of all, what God is, and what the law is, and what the nature of true religion is, that they may know what conversion means, and what it means to be a good man, and there will be no difficulty then to convince them of the depravity of mankind: for what leads them to think it so easy a thing to become a good man, and that men may be brought to it merely by the force of moral suasion, is, their wrong idea of the nature of true religion. If religion be what they suppose, then, no doubt, any body may easily become good; for corrupt nature can bear with such a religion. But if religion, or a conformity to God's law, be what I have endeavoured to prove it to be in the former discourse, then, no doubt, mankind are naturally diametrically opposite thereto in the temper of their minds; even all mankind, *Arminians* as well as others: and all do, or might know it, if they would seriously and honestly weigh the matter; for it is plain fact. The *Arminians* are wont mightily to cry up works, and plead for the

moral law, as though they were great friends to it: but if their mistakes about the moral law might once be rectified, and they be brought really and heartily to approve it, *as holy, just, and good,* one principal source of all their errors would be dried up; and particularly their wrong notions about *election*, and *universal redemption.*

"But where was there any love," (will the *objector* say,) "in God's giving his Son to die for the non-elect; or sincerity in his offering them mercy, if he never designed to bring them to glory, but from eternity, intended to leave them to perish in their sins?"

And where was there any love, *I answer,* in God's bringing the Israelites out of Egypt, or sincerity in his offering to bring them to Canaan, if he never designed eventually to bring them there; but, from eternity, intended to leave them to murmur and rebel, and to have their carcasses fall in the wilderness? The solution in both cases is the same, and is plainly this: as it was the Israelites' own fault that they did not come to Canaan at last, so it is the sinner's own fault that he finally falls short of glory. However, the Israelites were often in a rage, and ready to say, *The Lord hath brought us into the wilderness to kill us here;* and they murmured against God, and against Moses, for which they were struck dead by hundreds and thousands: and just so sinners do; and the same punishment do they deserve. But had the Israelites felt at heart that it was their own voluntary wickedness which was the *sole cause* of their ruin; and did sinners feel it at heart too, there would be no murmuring in one case or the other; but every mouth would be stopped. But I have spoken to this before.

To conclude; if this representation of things which I have given be according to truth, hence, then, we may learn these two things, which, indeed, were what I had principally in view in dwelling so long upon this subject, and labouring to answer objections; I say, we may learn, 1. That any poor sinner, all the world over, who hears the gospel and believes it, has sufficient grounds of encouragement, from the freeness of God's grace, and the sufficiency of Christ, and the universal calls of the gospel, to venture his eternal ALL in this way of

salvation, and may safely return to God through Christ, in hopes of acceptance; and that without any particular revelation that *he is elected*, or that *Christ died for him in particular*. "Any may come, the vilest and the worst; and therefore I may come:" and therefore such a particular revelation is perfectly needless: nor could it do any good; for the truth of the gospel may be depended upon; but the truth of such a particular revelation cannot. 2. That any poor, sinful, guilty, broken-hearted backslider, who groans under the burden of sin as the greatest evil, and longs to have the power of sin taken down, and his corruptions slain, and himself thoroughly subdued to God, may look up to the infinite free grace of God through Jesus Christ, and pray, "Lord take away this heart of stone, and give me a heart of flesh. Turn me, and I shall be turned. Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.—O create in me a clean heart, and renew in me a right spirit, and restore to me the joy of thy salvation! To thy sovereign grace and self-moving goodness I apply myself, through Jesus Christ. God be merciful to me, a sinner:" and that whether he knows himself to be a child of God, or no; and so whether he knows that he belongs to the number of the elect, or not. Nor does he need any particular revelation that Christ died for him in particular, or that he is elected, or that he is beloved of God: nor would these things do any good to clear up his warrant to come for mercy; because God may, through Christ, give his holy spirit to any that ask him. All who are athirst are invited to come and take of the waters of life freely. "Any may come; and therefore I may come, although the vilest creature in the world." And I appeal to all the generation of God's children, whether this has not been their way of coming to God through Christ, ever since the day they first came to know the Lord. Sure I am, this is the scripture-way. God has sent out a proclamation through a sinful, guilty world, inviting all to come to him, through Jesus Christ, for all things; and given many encouragements, by representing how free his grace is, how sufficient Christ is, and how faithful his promises, and that whosoever will, may come, &c. But no where in all the Bible has he revealed it that such and such in particular, by name, among mankind,

are elected; and that for these individuals Christ died in particular, by way of encouragement to those particular persons, in order to let them know that *they* might safely trust in Christ, and come to God through him. But then must we be right, when we understand the gospel and believe it, and, upon *the very encouragements which God has given*, are emboldened to return, in hopes of acceptance: and this must be agreeable to God's will; and to this must the influences of the true spirit tend. But to venture to return and look to God for mercy, merely upon any other ground, is anti-scriptural; and whatsoever spirit influences thereunto cannot, therefore, be from God.

And thus we see how the *door of life* is opened by Christ, our great Mediator and high-priest. And hence, Christ calls himself *the door*. John x. 9. *I am the door: by me, if any man enter in he shall be saved.* And hence, also, he calls himself *the way to the Father*. John xiv. 6. *I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father but by me; for through him,* (saith the Apostle, Eph. ii. 18.) *we both have an access, by one spirit, unto the Father;* and also, *through him, God is reconciling the world to himself,* sending *ambassadors,* and *beseeching them to be reconciled.* 2 Cor. v. 19, 20. Which leads me to the next thing proposed.

SECTION VI.

A VIEW OF THE METHODS OF DIVINE GRACE WITH MANKIND, FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD.

4. I am to show *what methods the great Governor of the world has entered upon, in order to put in execution those designs of mercy which he had in view when he contrived to open this* DOOR, *in such a wonderful and glorious manner, by the interposition of his own dear Son.*

The most high God is conscious of his own infinite excellence; his right to, and authority over the children of men: He sees mankind as being under infinite obligations to love and obey him, and that the least defect is an infinite evil. He ju[illegible] the law to be holy, just, and good: and mankind whol-

ly to blame for their non-conformity thereto, and worthy to be dealt with according to it. He knows their contrariety to him, to his law, and to his gospel. He sees all these things as they really are. His infinite wisdom sees how it is fit for such an one as he is, now, through a mediator, to conduct towards such a world as this is. He sees what conduct is most becoming, and, all things considered, most meet and suitable: and to this conduct the perfect rectitude of his nature prompts and inclines him. Upon the whole, he necessarily, and freely determines to act like himself; i. e. like an absolute sovereign, infinite in wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. This was his determination from eternity; this is his determination in time; and according to this rule he actually proceeds, in all his methods with a sinful, guilty, obstinate world; *working all things according to the counsel of his own will,* Eph. i. 11.; sovereignly, and yet wisely; holily and justly, and yet as *the Lord God gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in goodness and truth.* As is his nature, such is his conduct; and hence his conduct exhibits to us the very image of his heart. Thus it is in the *impetration,* and thus it is in the *application* of our redemption, and in all the methods he takes with a guilty world in general. And hence, all his ways are calculated to exalt God, and humble the sinner; to honour the law, and discountenance sin; to exclude boasting, and to glorify grace; as we shall more fully see in what follows:

(1.) As being the supreme Lord and sovereign Ruler of the whole world, he does, through Jesus Christ, the great Mediator, *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,* by whom his honour has been secured; he does, I say, through him, *grant, and, by an act of grace, confirm to the world of mankind, a general reprieve from that utter ruin which was threatened by the law, and to which an apostate world were exposed.* Total destruction was threatened in case of disobedience. Gen. ii. 17. *In dying thou shalt die;* i. e. thou shalt die with a witness: thy ruin shall be complete. And now nothing could be expected but a dreadful doom, and to be sealed down under everlasting despair. But, instead of this, the great God dooms the *tempter,* and threatens utter ruin to his new-erected kingdom. Gen. iii. 14, 15. *Because thou hast done this, thou art*

cursed; and thy head shall be bruised. But guilty man is reprieved from a total ruin, and allowed a space for repentance. And the world has now stood almost six thousand years, reprieved by the tender mercy of God, through Jesus Christ.

Indeed, certain evils were denounced by the Majesty of heaven, as standing monuments of his displeasure, always to attend a guilty race while in this world. Peculiar sorrows were appointed to women, and hard labour and toil to men, and sickness and pain to both, till *death* should put an end to their reprieve and to their space for repentance. (*Ver.* 16—19.) And when our day to die shall come, we are not to know: we lie at mercy, and God acts sovereignly: so long as he pleases, so long shall we be reprieved, and no longer. And thus, while tender mercy appears in the general reprieve, the holiness, and justice, and sovereignty of God appear in the manner of it. God is exalted; a guilty world lies at his mercy; they are, in a sense, continually under his rod, and every moment liable to drop into an eternal hell. They are held up in his hand: hell gapes to receive them, and now he lets one fall, and then another: now this, and then that, just as it seems good in his sight Surely, this is awful! Surely, mankind are in very humbling circumstances, and in circumstances wonderfully calculated to awaken them *to repent and pray to God, if eradventure their wickedness may be forgiven.*

When the general reprieve, granted to this lower world, shall come to a period, then will the great Judge of the world proceed, with all who shall be found impenitent, *according to law*, without any mixture of mercy. The present reprieve granted as a space for repentance, is not *of the law*, but *of mere grace through Jesus Christ.* Now *grace* takes place, and patience, forbearance, and long-suffering, sit on the throne: but then *law* shall take place, and strict justice reign. The mediation of Christ, at present, secures the honour of law and justice, and opens the door for grace; but then the day of grace will be at an end. A guilty world shall no longer be treated in a way of mercy, and favoured on Christ's account; but be proceeded against in flaming fire and terrible vengeance, and every one be punished according to his deserts. How long the day of God's patience with a guilty world is to last,

we know not. A guilty world lies at his mercy, and may be all summoned to the bar when he pleases. Surely this is awful and awakening! but this is the state in which God means to show all long-suffering, and to exercise and display the infinite patience of his nature: and surely this should *lead us to* repentance! Thus, this is one step in a way of mercy, which God, in his infinite grace through Jesus Christ, has taken with a guilty world. And what is the improvement which mankind are disposed to make of it? Why, *because sentence against their evil works is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the Sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.* Eccles. viii. 11.

(2.) Another favour granted to mankind in general by the great Governor of the world, through Jesus Chrsit, is *a competency of the good things of this life for their comfortable support, while under this reprieve and in this new state of probation.* By law mankind, for their apostacy, stood disinherited of every good thing, doomed to a complete destruction. *Gen.* ii 17; but now through a Mediator, they are dealt with in a way of mercy. It is true, in token of the divine displeasure, God turned man out of paradise, and cursed the ground, and subjected man to hard labour, (*Gen.* iii.) but then, at the same time, for Christ's sake, a general grant of many good things is made to a guilty world. They are allowed to live on God's earth; breathe in his air; see by the light of his sun: to eat of the herb of the field, and to eat bread in the sweat of their face: to clothe themselves with the skins of slain beasts. *Gen.* iii. They are allowed summer and winter; seed-time and harvest; and the beasts of the field are given to them. *Gen.* viii. 22. and ix. 1, 2, 3. Yea, it has been God's way abundantly to do good to a guilty world: *to send rain, and grant fruitful seasons, and fill the hearts of men with food and gladness.* Acts xiv. 17. So that, considering we are an apostate guilty world, we may well say, with the Psalmist, *The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.* Psalm xxxiii. 5.; and this, notwithstanding all the calamities which overspread the whole earth: for we are now to attribute every thing in our circumstances, whereby we are better of it than the damned in hell are, to the mere mercy and goodness of God, through Jesus Christ. Thus God reprieves a guilty world, and grants

them food and raiment, to the intent that they may have a space for repentance. Surely now it is vile, infinitely vile, *to despise the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering,* and not to take it in and understand it, *that the goodness of God should lead us to repentance.* And it is great madness, *after our hard and impenitent hearts to go on in our rebellion, and treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.* Rom. ii. 4, 5. And yet this is the general temper, and common way of the world.

(3.) Another common favour granted to mankind, upon Christ's account, is, *a general resurrection from the dead,* (1 Cor. xv. 21.) to the intent that all who believe, repent, and return to God through Jesus Christ, may be completely happy in soul and body for ever. It is certain the law threatened death, but made no provision for a resurrection: and if the law had been executed, and no mediator provided, we have no reason to think there ever would have been any resurrection. And I cannot see why a general resurrection may not be considered under the notion of a mercy in itself, notwithstanding many, by their final impenitence, lay a foundation for their being raised up to everlasting shame and confusion. I am ready to think that to be raised from the dead must surely be of the nature of a *mercy,* and so be the effect of Christ's merits; but the particular manner in which the wicked shall be raised, may nevertheless be considered as a *punishment,* and so be the effect of their sin and final impenitence. Christ's merit lays the foundation for a general resurrection; and all who believe and repent shall be raised up to glory and complete blessedness; and all who die in their sins shall be raised up to shame and complete misery.

(4.) There are also divers other things granted to mankind in general, which seem pretty evidently to be of the nature of mercies, and so to be owing to the interposition and merits of our glorious Mediator, Christ Jesus, the only Mediator between God and a sinful, guilty world; to whose merits and mediation, every thing which mankind enjoy, which is of the nature of a mercy, is to be attributed; divers things, I say, whereby much is done towards putting such an apostate race

of beings into a capacity of comfortably living together in this world, while they are in their new state of probation; divers things in our temper, which seem originally to take their rise very much from that temperament of body and animal constitution which God, our Former, gives us; there is a *natural good humour, a natural compassion, a natural modesty,* and *natural affections.* These things, in a greater or less degree, we find to be natural to men, and to have a very great influence to keep under and restrain their corruptions, and to incline and prompt to many actions materially good, and greatly for the comfort of human society and benefit of mankind in general. These things do evidently keep mankind from abundance of wickedness, which otherwise they would commit; they have a heart for a thousand abominations, but these things restrain them: and these things do evidently put mankind on to a thousand actions materially good, which otherwise they would never do: they have a heart bad enough to neglect them, but these things excite them to do them. Were it not for these and other restraints, I see not why mankind should not be as bad in this world, as they will be in the next. Wicked men have no wickedness infused into them at death; and therefore they have no other nature, no other principle of sin in their hearts, after they are dead, than they had before: but, as soon as they are dead, they are evidently no doubt as universally contrary to God and all that is good, as the devils themselves. As soon as ever those things which now restrain them are all removed, their true temper appears without any disguise. It is no doubt, therefore, a great mercy for mankind to be thus restrained. They enjoy more comfort, they commit less sin, they merit less punishment, they are under better advantages to live together, to enjoy the means of grace, and attend to the offers of mercy by Jesus Christ, *who is the Saviour of all men, but especially of them that believe.* 1 Tim. iv. 10.

Thus the great God, instead of executing the sentence of the law in all its severity upon a guilty world, does, through the mediation of Jesus Christ, grant to mankind in general these common favours. They are reprieved from a total ruin; have a comfortable maintenance in this world allowed them;

a general resurrection is decreed; several natural endowments are granted, to restrain from bad actions, and to prompt to actions materially good. And hereby the Governor of the world has laid the foundation, and prepared the way to go on to use the methods he designed, more immediately tending to reclaim and recover a sinful, guilty world to himself; for now mankind are put into a sort of capacity of being treated with in such a way.

These things ought deeply to affect mankind. We lie under many calamities, and yet enjoy many mercies in this our natural state of guilt and condemnation; all which ought to be improved to awaken, convince, and humble us, and lead us to repent, and cry to God for pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace, and predispose us cordially to receive and embrace that revelation, which God has made in his word, of our ruin, and the way of our recovery.

But, through the great blindness and corruption of mankind, these things have had a very contrary effect. Mankind, finding themselves thus reprieved, and thus kindly treated by God, have many of them hereby been led to think they are in pretty good standing; not *by nature children of wrath*, and under *condemnation*. The devil told Eve they *should not surely die;* so, many are now ready to think that the old law, which threatened the least sin with death, is repealed; and that we are now born into the world free from any guilt. And mankind, finding themselves endowed with *natural modesty, good-humour, compassion,* &c. are ready to dream that they are born into the world without any sinful corruption of nature, but rather as holy as Adam in innocence; and hence are very insensible of any need of such a Redeemer and Sanctifier as are provided. And so they are predisposed to dislike that revelation which God has made in his word concerning our ruin and the way of our recovery. And hence mankind are strongly bent to misunderstand, and misinterpret, and disbelieve the law and the gospel. And besides, by this goodness and forbearance of God, men are emboldened in sin, as if it were not a very great evil, nor God very much set against it. They begin to think God is all made up of mercy, and that they are in no great danger. And so, *after their hard*

and impenitent hearts, they go on to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. Thus God and his goodness are abused by this vile, wicked race of apostate, rebellious creatures. And, indeed, all this is no more than was expected: great reason, therefore, was there for him so effectually to secure his own honour, and the honour of his holy law, by the interposition of his own dear Son as Mediator. And now, let mankind be ever so bad, he can go on with his methods of mercy, to accomplish all his designs of grace; and all consistently with the honour of his holiness and justice, law and government, and sacred authority.

(5.) Mankind being naturally very insensible of their sinful, guilty, ruined state; and totally ignorant of, and unable to find out, any way of obtaining the divine favour, and wholly averse, in the temper of their hearts, to a genuine return to God; therefore God, of his infinite grace through Jesus Christ, has, in various ways, and divers manners, according to the good pleasure of his will, by immediate revelation from heaven, set before mankind their ruin, and the way of their recovery; offered many arguments, motives, and encouragements, to persuade them to return, and denounced terrible threatenings to deter them from going on in their rebellion, and directed them, in the use of certain means of grace, to seek for the inward influences of the Holy Spirit, to awaken and convince, to humble and convert, and effectually recover them to God through the great Mediator.

(6.) And, because the Most High sees that through the very bad temper of mankind, this external revelation, although most excellently adapted thereto, yet if left to themselves, would finally prove altogether ineffectual to recover any of mankind; yea, so very far from it, that mankind would not so much as rightly understand or believe it, or seriously take matters into consideration, but would misunderstand and pervert it, and finally universally disbelieve and renounce and forget it, and not suffer it to have any room in the world: therefore he has, from the beginning of the world, and does still, and will to the end of the world, by the inward influences of his spirit, and by the outward dispensations of his providence,

carry on, according to his sovereign pleasure, the work of his grace; accomplish his eternal purposes of mercy; recover sinners to himself; maintain true religion in the world: preserve his church; gather in all the elect; display all his glorious perfections in his dealings with mankind, and get to himself a great name in the end; exhibiting in his whole conduct, from first to last, the most lively image of himself.

In these two last particulars we have a general account of those methods which God does take with a sinful, guilty race, more immediately tending to their recovery, which we may see exemplified in his dealings with mankind, from the beginning.

1. In the earliest ages of the world, *immediately after the fall*, he began to enter upon these methods of grace: he taught our first parents their ruin, and the way of their recovery by the promised *seed;* and instituted sacrifices to typify the great atonement, which should afterwards be made for the sins of the world. *Gen.* iii. And what he taught our first parents, they taught their children: and hence *Cain* and *Abel*, and after-generations, learnt to worship God by sacrifice. *Gen.* iv. 3—8. Now *Adam* lived until *Methuselah* was two hundred and forty-six years old, and *Methuselah* lived until *Shem* was an hundred years old, and *Shem* lived until the time of *Abraham* and *Isaac;* yea, till *Isaac* was fifty years old; so that the news of *Adam's* fall, of the ruin of mankind, and of salvation by the *seed of the woman*, might easily have been handed down by tradition from one to another, and all mankind might have been fully acquainted with these things. And besides these external teachings and means of grace, God granted the inward influences of his spirit, whereby some were effectually recovered to God, of whom were *Abel, Enoch*, and *Noah*, who were also signalized by divine Providence. *Gen.* iv. 4. v. 22. vi. 9. compared with *Heb.* xi. 4—7.

But while God thus early began to use methods for the recovery of a sinful, guilty world to himself, they began early to show their aversion to God, and unwillingness to return. *Cain* seems, by the sacrifice which he offered, quite insensible that he was a fallen creature, and that he needed an atonement for *sin*. He brought only of the fruit of the ground for a thank-*offering*, (like the *Pharisee* in Luke xviii. whose prayer con-

sisted only in thanksgiving, without any faith or repentance,) but brought none of the flock for a sin-offering, (*Gen.* iv.) although *without shedding of blood there could be no remission.* Heb. ix. 22. He was a formal, impenitent hypocrite, nor would God accept him; but *Abel* found favour in the sight of the Lord by faith. *Heb.* xi. 4. And therefore *Cain* was angry at God, and enraged at his brother, and murdered him, and cast off all religion, and gave himself up to serve his lusts: yea, he forsook the visible church of God, and departed, and went into the land of *Nod.* And thus he, and afterwards, his posterity after him, join to renounce true religion, and openly distinguish themselves from God's visible people on earth. *Gen.* iv. 16. And it seems good to the supreme Governor of the world even to let them all take their way, and act their own nature.

For a while true religion was maintained in the family of *Seth.* Gen. iv. 26.: and to put honour upon the practice thereof, *Enoch* was translated to heaven. *Gen.* v. 24. But yet, in process of time, they degenerated and became so much like the rest of the world; like the posterity of *Cain,* that they were disposed to relish their company, and marry their daughters. *Gen.* vi. 2. And then presently the contagion spread; *the wickedness of mankind* in general *was great upon the earth,* (ver. 5.) *All flesh corrupted their ways, and the earth was filled with violence,* (ver. 11, 12.) And now the great Governor of the world raises up *Noah,* and makes him a *preacher of righteousness;* and *Noah* preaches, and God waits an hundred and twenty years; but mankind will not be reformed, and therefore God gives over that generation, and drowns the world by an universal deluge. *First,* Mankind break through all the restraints lying upon them, discover the very temper of their hearts, publicly show their aversion to God, their disregard of his grace, their utter unwillingness to return, and their perverse propensity to go on in their rebellion. *Secondly,* God, through the Mediator, uses means to reclaim them, and shows all long-suffering, and so tries them. *Thirdly,* They, remaining obstinate, trampling under foot his authority, and despising his goodness, he, at last, in a most public manner, executes righteous vengeance upon them. He

displays his infinite goodness and patience in waiting so long, and using so many means for their recovery: he displays his sovereignty in waiting but just so long, and in taking but just so much pains with them: he displays his holiness, justice, and truth, in bringing that destruction upon them at the very time before threatened: and, in the whole, he displays his infinite wisdom; his whole conduct being excellently well calculated to make all succeeding generations *know that he is the* LORD, and suited to maintain the honour of his holiness, justice, goodness, and truth, of his law and government, and sacred authority. And thus we see what methods God took with the old world, together with the result of all. And now,

2. We come to take a brief view of his ways with mankind *since the flood*, and of their carriage towards him. There is no doubt but that Noah had received by tradition and well understood the fall of Adam, the ruin of mankind, the way of recovery by *the seed of the woman*, the institution, end, and design of sacrifices. And there is no doubt but that he faithfully instructed his children, in what he himself knew; and they might have taught their children, and they the generation following, and so all the world might have known the way of salvation through a mediator. And it is certain that this would have been the case, had mankind been in a disposition sufficiently to have prized the knowledge of these things. But *when they knew God*, by parental instruction, *they did not glorify him as God; neither were they thankful* for these advantages which infinite goodness had granted them, (Rom. i. 21.) *but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.* And they soon lost the knowledge of true religion, and fell off to idolatry, and *changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and creeping things*, (ver. 23.) *For they did not like to retain God in their knowledge*, (ver. 28.) And when mankind, presently after the flood, did thus publicly discover the temper of their hearts, by renouncing the true God and true religion, and falling away to idolatry and superstition, and all manner of wickedness; I say, when mankind, notwithstand-

ing the late awful warning they had had by the universal deluge, did thus quickly show themselves so entirely disposed to their sinful and rebellious courses; *for this cause God gave them up,* (ver. 24. 26. 28.) even suffered them to take their own way, and run their own ruin. The whole earth might all have been God's people, and his visible family, but they would not: they might all have retained the knowledge of the true God and of the way to life, but they *did not like to,* and God was not obliged to make them, and therefore he even let them take their own course; and yet took care, in after ages, not to leave himself without witness, but, by many wonderful works, to let all the nations of the earth *know that he was the* LORD. And if any would repent and return, he made provision for their reception as proselytes into the Jewish Church. And doubtless here and there one, from age to age, by the inward influences of his blessed spirit, were brought so to do; and *the rest were blinded,* as is said in a parallel case. Rom. xi. 7.

And now the knowledge of the true God, and of true religion, must presently have been lost from off the face of the whole earth, and never have been recovered, and *satan* had the most full possession of the whole world to the latest posterity, had not free and sovereign grace interposed in a most wonderful manner, in this dark and awful juncture. But, in this very season, God was pleased, of his own mere goodness and sovereign pleasure, still through the appointed mediator, by the gracious influences of his spirit, and by immediate revelations, and by the special dispensations of his providence, to preserve to himself a seed to serve him. He called Abram alone, as it were, from the rest of the world, and blessed him; he made further revelations to him touching the *promised seed,* and entered into a covenant to be his God, and the God of his children after him. And now, a new world of wonders begins to open to our view, in the divine dispensations towards Abram and his seed. *Gen.* xii. &c.

Note.—While God was doing these things with Abraham, the rest of the world grew wicked apace; and therefore God thought fit to give a specimen of the temper of his heart, and let the nations *know that he was the* LORD, *by raining fire and*

brimstone out of heaven upon Sodom and Gomorrah, who were remarkably wicked, and, at the same time, delivering *righteous Lot.* (Gen. x.) A dispensation so remarkable, and never the like before heard of, that no doubt it flew like lightning all the world over, and spread terror and surprise through the guilty nations. However, *for all this, they turned not to the Lord.*—Well, Abraham is circumcised, with all his household, and true religion is taught and maintained in his family, and Isaac his son, and Eleazer his servant, seem to have been savingly wrought upon by divine grace. And God blesses Abraham, and he becomes very great; and God protects him wherever he goes, to the honour of his great name, in the midst of an idolatrous world. Nevertheless, the world, instead of growing wiser and better by all this, which doubtless was heard of and much wondered at among the nations, they grew worse and worse; yea, wickedness appears openly in Abraham's family itself. Ishmael discovers a bad spirit; he mocks at Isaac. Gen xxi. 9. *And he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit.* Gal. iv. 29. So that he was, in a sort, excommunicated and cast out of God's visible family; and it is not long before true religion is a thing unknown among his numerous posterity. And they who were of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, were now numbered with the heathen. Thus, after this sort, it fared with Cain, the first persecutor; and thus it fares with Ishmael, for the warning of all godless and carnal professors. And yet, from age to age, this same temper has appeared, and yet still does appear, although, perhaps, this sin, from the beginning of the world to this day, has never yet gone unpunished.

Now, it was said, *In* Isaac *shall thy seed be called.* And with him God renewed the covenant, and to him the promises were repeated, and God blessed him, and he became very great; and he also was under a special divine protection: yet there was a *profane Esau* in his family, who made so light of the spiritual blessings of Abraham, as, for a mere trifle, to sell his *birth-right.* And he afterwards became a persecutor of his brother Jacob, and his posterity soon lost the knowledge of the true God and of the true religion, and degenerated into a state of heathenism.

Nor can it be attributed to any thing but the free and sovereign grace of God, that Jacob and his seed did not do so too. But so it was; for so it seemed good in the eyes of him, who has *mercy on whom he will have mercy*, and whose *purpose according to election, always stands independent of works.* Rom. ix. 11. I say, so it was, through the power of him *who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will*, that when all the other nations of the earth were suffered to renounce the true God and the true religion, that *in Jacob God was known, and his name was great in Israel.*—Never was there a nation which discovered a stronger propensity to idolatry, and all manner of wickedness, than they. And notwithstanding all the mighty restraints, by God laid upon them, they were almost perpetually breaking through all, and rushing on like the horse into the battle. Neither warnings, nor threatenings, nor the authority of God, nor the tears of their prophets, nor the most terrible judgments, were ever able effectually to restrain that people and turn them to God. And had not God always, by his special grace, kept a *remnant* for himself, they would have been like *Sodom*, and like to *Gomorrah. Isai.* i. 2. 9. *Rom.* xi. 2. 7.

Now the divine perfections were most illustriously displayed, in the divine conduct towards this people, from age to age; and that not only before their faces, but also in the eyes of all the nations round about them. Marvellous things were wrought in Egypt, and wonders at the Red Sea, and forty years in the wilderness, which no doubt did ring through the world, and were enough to have made all the earth *know that he was the* LORD, and, but for their perverse stubbornness, to have brought them all to worship him, and him only: but all this was so far from reclaiming the heathen nations, that it hardly tamed the Israelites themselves. They rebelled at Tiberah, and at Massah, and at Kibroth-Hattaavah, and were perpetually *provoking the Lord to wrath.* Deut. ix. *When he slew them, then they sought him; and returned and inquired early after God. Nevertheless, they did flatter him with their mouth, and lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant.* Psal. lxxviii. 34—37. And many a time were they

within a hair's breadth of destruction, and would surely have been utterly destroyed, but that *he wrought for his great name's sake.* Exod. xxxii. Num. xiv. Ezek. xx.

So again, in the days of Joshua, he divided Jordan, *and drove out the heathen before them, and gave them their land in possession, and made the tribes of Israel dwell in their tents. Yet they afterwards tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies, but turned back and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images.* Psalm lxxviii. 54—58. Judg. ii. 6—20. And now, for the space of many years, God, by raising up *judges,* and by sending *prophets,* and executing judgments, did labour to reform them; but all in vain; for *they quickly turned aside, like a deceitful bow.* However, in the mean while, the goodness and patience of God on the one hand, and his holiness and justice on the other, were illustriously displayed by his wonderful works in the midst of the earth, to be sounded out among all nations, that all the earth might *know that he was the* LORD.

In the days of David and Solomon, God *wrought for his great name's sake* and exalted his people, and made Israel honourable in the sight of all nations; yet were they not sincere in his sight: and when outward restraints were afterwards taken off, they soon discovered the hidden temper of their hearts; that they did not care for God or his worship, but liked *Dan* and *Bethel* as well as the temple of Jerusalem. Thus did the ten tribes; nor was their treacherous sister, Judah, more sincere. When a good king reigned, they would pretend to be good; and when a bad king reigned, they stood ready for idols. And now God sent judgment upon them time after time, and sent all his servants, the prophets, saying, *O do not this abominable thing which my soul hateth:* but they would not hearken. *The Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place: but they mocked the messengers, of God, and despised his works, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of God arose against his people, till there was no remedy. Therefore he brought upon*

them the king of the Chaldees, and gave them all into his hand. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16, 17.

However, God was tenderly touched at the public reproach and dishonour to which his great name is exposed, in the eyes of insulting nations all around, who *clapped their hands, and stamped with their feet, and rejoiced with all their heart,* for what was done to the people called by his name; glorying that their GOD was no better than the *dumb idols* which they served. Wherefore God raised up the prophet Ezekiel, who clears up God's conduct towards his people, in chapters 16th and 18th, and on; and dooms the neighbouring nations in the name of God, declaring what judgment should come upon them from the hand of God, for their insults, whereby they should be made to *know that he was the* LORD: as in the 25th, to chapter 31. And now also Daniel and his companions were by God raised up, that by them his name might become great in the eyes of all nations. And for them he works such deliverances as to constrain the haughty monarchs of the earth to issue out their decrees through all the world, that none should *speak any thing amiss* against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, upon pain of being *cut in pieces,* and their *houses made a dung-hill,* and that, in all their dominions, men should *fear and tremble* before the God of Daniel. (*Dan.* iii. 29. vi. 26.) Surely the infinite wisdom of God appears most wonderfully, in all the astonishing methods which he has taken to make himself known, and to keep up the honour of his great name among such a wicked, God-hating race of beings!

And now, all this while, there was nothing but the infinite goodness, and free and sovereign grace of God, together with his covenant faithfulness, to move him not to cast off and utterly reject his people, and let them be scattered among the heathen, and their name perish from off the earth. It was for *his great name's sake* that he wrought salvation for them from time to time. *Ezek.* xx. When there was no motive in them, but every thing to the contrary; then, for his own sake, he undertook *to write his law in their hearts, and put it in their inward parts: to be their God, and make them his people, and to remember their iniquities no more against them, and to bring*

them back to their own land, and plant them, and build them up. Ezek. xxxvi. 16—34.

And, however, by the Babylonish captivity, the Jewish people were pretty thoroughly cured of their idolatrous disposition, yet, after their return, and after the godly men of that generation were dead, they soon began to show that they were as averse to God, and the life of religion, as ever. And yet, all these things notwithstanding, God is determined to make one trial more. He had sent one servant after another, and they had been beaten, and stoned, and put to shame, and sent away empty. Now, therefore, he sends his *only Son*, to see if they will hear him; and behold they say, *Come, let us kill him.* Mat. xxi. 33—39. *Wherefore*, at last, God determines to cast off that nation, (ver. 41.) and to go and try the heathen, whom, for a long time, he had suffered to take their own ways.

And now, to his apostles Christ gives commission to go *into all the earth, and preach the gospel to every creature; and he that believeth*, says he, *shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned.* And they run, and preach, and cry, *Repent, and turn from your dumb idols, to serve the living God.* And had not they been stopped, they would soon have carried the news all round the world. But Jews and Gentiles combine together, and earth and hell are in arms to defeat the design; nevertheless, *as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.* And God carried on his work through a sea of blood, and in about three hundred years conquered the Roman empire.

No sooner is this done, but the *mystery of iniquity* begins to work, and *the man of sin* to be revealed. The devil and his servants turn their coat, and, under the cloak of religion and good order, establish the kingdom of satan in a new form: for it is the nature of mankind to hate true religion. And now Antichrist reigns, and *scatters the holy people, and wears out the saints of the most high, for a time, and times, and half a time.* In the mean while, *the woman flies into the wilderness, the witnesses prophecy in sackcloth,* until, at last, *the witnesses* themselves *are slain.* And now religion is driven even just out of the world, and there had been no hope, but that *God awoke as one out of sleep, like a mighty man that shouteth by rea-*

son of wine. And behold *the spirit of life from God enters into the two witnesses,* that is, Luther and Calvin, and others their contemporaries; *and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them which saw them.* And God put them out of their enemies' reach. *And there was a great earthquake, and a tenth part of the city fell.* Rev. ix. And a glorious day began to dawn.

But now, it is not long before many turn hereties and enthusiasts, and the world rises in arms, and by fire and sword endeavours to demolish the Redeemer's kingdom. However, God wrought for his great name's sake, and has ever since been working, and will go on conquering and to conquer, until all the nations of the earth are brought into subjection to his son.

Thus we have taken a brief view of the methods which God has taken to recover a sinful, guilty world, to himself The *external means* we have chiefly dwelt upon; upon the *internal,* something further shall be added presently: but let us first make a few *remarks.*

REM. 1. Had not mankind been wholly to blame, they might *all* of them, from the beginning, have enjoyed the benefit of divine *revelation.* Nothing secluded them therefrom, but their own bad temper and bad conduct. And had not mankind been wholly to blame, they might all of them have enjoyed the gospel, and had it preached all over the world to this day: nothing has hindered it but their own perverse obstinacy, their hating the light, and hating the truth. Strange it is, therefore, that some men of learning should be so full of charity for the heathen, who thus hate God, despise Christ, and reject the gospel*.

* But perhaps some will be ready to say, that *there may be many honest persons among the* heathen, *who never heard of the gospel, and never rejected it, who may stand fair for heaven.*

ANS. There is a number of such honest sort of persons among Christians, but their natural enmity to God and Christ, and gospel-grace, is found to be as great as others; and sometimes *publicans* and *harlots* enter into heaven before them. Surely none of them are more honest than the *young man* in the gospel, nor ever arrived to greater attainments; and therefore all of them might do as he did, if under the same circumstances. That natural kind of honesty, many

Rem. 2. Mankind have manifested the highest degree of *aversion* to God and true religion from the *beginning* of the world, and that almost in all possible ways. Hundreds, and thousands, and millions, have they in their rage put to death, and that in the most cruel and barbarous manner. Strange it is, therefore, that so many matters of fact have not, to this day, convinced mankind that they are truly enemies to God. Strange that they can have the face to make the old pretence, and say, *If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.* Mat. xxiii. 30. when all the time, from age to age, they have been acting over the old scene.

Rem. 3. It has been owing wholly and entirely to the free grace and almighty power of God, that the *church* has been *preserved*, and true religion not driven quite out of the world. It is one of the greatest miracles that ever was wrought.

Rem. 4. God has always acted *sovereignly* in choosing what family, nation, or nations, he would preserve true religion among; *all* being by nature equally averse to God, and equally unworthy, and has always acted *justly* in giving over other families and nations for their sin and apostacy.

Rem. 5. The whole *scheme* of the divine conduct has been most *excellently calculated* to display all the divine perfections to the best advantage; and it does exhibit to us the very image of his heart in strong and lively colours. But to proceed;

Although the external means of grace, and remarkable dispensations of Providence, perhaps may, in a measure, sometimes restrain mankind, and bring them to a feigned submission to God and his laws; yet, such is their rooted enmity and entire aversion to God and true religion, that not one will hereby be brought to repent and sincerely turn to God. Psal. lxxviii. 34—37. and lxxxi. 8—12. Isai. v. 1—7. Nothing

times, is an occasion of men's being hardened against Christianity; for they are very ready to say, *God, I thank thee, I am not as other men*, like him in *Luke* xviii. Doubtless these *honest heathen* would do as their fathers did, had they the opportunity. So the *honest Jews* did. See *Mat.* xxiii. 29—33.

short of those inward influences of the spirit, which are almighty and all-conquering, will effectually attain the end. Mat. xi. 20—27. Eph. i. 19. And therefore, besides the *external means of grace*, God has, as it were, taken a world of pains with one and another of mankind *by the inward influences of his* SPIRIT. The external means, indeed, which have been used, are more open to observation; and so also is that external opposition which mankind have made: but the same ends which God has been pursuing by the external means, viz. to convince mankind of their sinful, guilty, ruined state, and bring them to return to God through a mediator; the same has he been pursuing, by the inward influences of his spirit; and the same opposition which has openly appeared against the means of grace, has also secretly wrought mightily in the hearts of men against the inward influences of the spirit. Mankind are as much inclined to resist the spirit, as they are the *word*, of God, and that for the same reason and from the same temper; because both aim at the same thing; a thing most contrary to their corruptions.

Perhaps there are *some* whom God never vouchsafes at all to strive with by his spirit; and these are ready to think there is no such thing. *Others* are a little awakened, and, from self-love, the fears of hell, and the hopes of heaven, they reform their lives a little, and set about some external duties, and so think to make amends for their past sins, and recommend themselves to the divine favour; but are as great enemies as ever to the power of religion: and here God leaves them to perish. *Others* are carried further, and become more strict and painful, but still from the same principles: and there they are left to perish. Not one takes one step in earnest, unless he is driven to it; nor goes one step further than he is driven: and therefore God leaves one here, and another there, as seems good in his sight. They do not *like to retain God in their knowledge*, and therefore he *gives them over to a reprobate mind*, as those spoken of in Rom. i. 28. *Some*, indeed, are carried very far by the common influences of the Holy Spirit; *they are enlightened, they taste of the heavenly gift, and of the powers of the world to come, and are made partakers of the Holy Ghost;* and yet, after all, *fall away*

and perish. Heb. vi. They have a great sense of their sinful, guilty, undone state; of the wrath of God, and dreadfulness of damnation, and are mightily brought down; and then have a great sense of the mercy of God, the dying love of Christ, and the glory of heaven: and they think they are converted, and they are ravished with the thought. However, in the end, all is turned to feed their pride and their presumption, and to harden and embolden them in sin. They are not so much afraid of sin now, because they are confident they shall never go to hell. And many times this sort of people, through the great swelling of spiritual pride, and the immediate influences of Satan, come to have strange experiences; turn to be strange creatures; broach strange errors; and seem to be nearly forsaken by God, reason, and conscience: and yet, (yea, and by the same means,) get to be the *holiest* creatures in the world, by their own account. But while the sinners, with whom the Holy Spirit strives, do many of them turn out after this sort, some in one way and some in another, there are *others* with whom God makes thorough work; that is, makes them thoroughly understand and feel their sinful, guilty, helpless, undone state, and see into and believe the gospel-way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, and return home to God in that way. And now they *are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.* 1 Pet. i. 5. And here God has *mercy on whom he will have mercy;* and even so it has been as to the external means of grace from the beginning of the world. With *some,* God has taken more pains and longer; and with *others,* less pains and shorter: but when all the rest of the world degenerated to *heathenism,* God took effectual methods with the Israelites to keep them from doing so too. And thus, in a resembling manner, he does, with all the spiritual seed of Abraham; with his elect: whereby, in spite of all opposition, they are brought to glory at last; they are fed with *manna* every day: the *pillar of cloud* by day, and *of fire* by night, is their continual guide; and *the rock which follows them is Christ;* i. e. they are fed and are guided, they live and are refreshed, and are helped to hold on their way, by continual influences from on high, by constant communications of divine grace. And so *the path of the just is*

like the shining light, which shines more and more to the perfect day.

REMARKS. Never is any poor sinner under the light of the gospel passed by, without being awakened by the Holy Spirit; but God sees he is deaf to the voice of his word, and hates to be awakened, and loves to go on secure. Never is any awakened sinner forsaken by the spirit of God, and left to take his own way, and run his own ruin, but that first he resisted and grieved the Holy Spirit, and stifled conviction, and rent away, as it were, out of God's hands. And never is a poor sinner savingly brought home to God and trained up for heaven, but that, from first to last, it was absolutely and entirely owing to the infinite goodness, free grace, and almighty power of God. And, indeed, thus will it appear at the great day of judgment, that all who perish are wholly to blame, and all that are saved will have none to glory in but the Lord. But I have elsewhere so much insisted upon the nature of the influences of the Holy Spirit, that I must not here enlarge.

Thus the way to life is opened by Christ Jesus, and all are invited to return and be saved. And thus we see the methods which God takes for the recovery of a sinful, guilty world. And from all that has been said we may draw these *inferences.*

1. It is undoubtedly the duty of poor sinners to be *deeply affected* with all these wonderful methods of divine grace, and to *strive and labour with the greatest painfulness and diligence,* to fall in with the design of the gospel; to be sensible of their sinful, guilty, undone state, and to look to the free grace of God, through Jesus Christ, for relief, and to repent and return to God through him. Luke xiii. 24. *Strive to enter in at the strait gate.* Some are of the opinion, that because the very best that sinners can do, while enemies to God in their hearts, is, as to the *manner* of it, sinful and odious in the eyes of the divine holiness, that therefore their best way is to do nothing, but to sit still and wait for the spirit; but nothing is more contrary to scripture or reason. The scripture says, *Strive to enter.* And reason teaches, that when the God of Heaven, the great Governor of the world, is thus coming out after guilty rebels in a way of mercy, it becomes them to be

deeply affected thereat, and to exert all their rational powers in opposition to their sloth and corruptions, labouring to lie open to the means of conviction; avoiding every thing that tends to promote security, and to render ineffectual the methods of divine grace, and practising every thing that tends to their further awakening. And O, let this be remembered, that it is sinners' resisting the methods of grace, which causes God to give them over. Psal. lxxxi. 11, 12, 13. *But my people would not hearken to my voice: and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up to their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels. O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways!*

2. From what has been said, we may learn that it is madness and folly for poor sinners to use the means of grace under a notion of *doing their whole duty*, and so *pacify their consciences*. The means of grace are designed, in the first place, to convince sinners of their sinful, guilty, ruined state: and for them to forget, totally forget, this their *end*, and to go about to attend upon them under a notion of doing that *duty* which they owe to God, as something in lieu of that perfect obedience which the law requires, is quite to lose the benefit of the means of grace; yea, to thwart their very design; and tends to keep men from conviction and conversion, and seal them down in spiritual security. That which God directs them to do, to the end their consciences might be more awakened, they do, that their consciences might be more quieted. The means which were appointed to make them more sensible of their need of Christ and grace, they use to make themselves the more insensible thereof.

3. Sinners are not to use the means of grace under a notion of making amends for their past sins, and recommending themselves to God, (Rom. x. 3.) nor under a notion that by their strongest efforts they shall be ever able to renew their own nature, (Eph. ii. 1.) nor under a notion they can do any thing at all to prevail with God to renew them, (Rom. xi. 35, 36.) But, on the contrary, in the use of the means of grace, they are to seek for and labour after a thorough conviction, that they can neither make any amends for their past sins, nor in the least recommend themselves to God; that they

cannot renew their own nature, nor in the least move God to show them this mercy, to the intent, that being thus convinced of their ruined, helpless state, they may be prepared to look to the free mercy and sovereign grace of God through Christ, for all things; which is the very thing that the gospel aims at, (*Rom.* iii. 9—26.) and which the means of grace are designed to promote, and bring them to; and to which the spirit of God, by his inward influences, does, in the use of means, finally bring all who are saved. *Rom.* vii. 8, 9. *Gal.* iii. 24.

For sinners to use the means of grace, under the other notions aforesaid, is practically to say, "We are not fallen, sinful, guilty, helpless, undone creatures; nor do we need the redeemer or the sanctifier which God has provided; nor do we lie at his mercy, or intend to be beholden to his mere sovereign grace. If we have sinned we can make amends for it: if we have displeased God, we can pacify him again: if we are wicked, we can become good: or, if we do as well as we can, and then want any further help, God is obliged to help us."

If, therefore, sinners would take the wisest course to be the better for the use of the means of grace, they must try to fall in with God's design, and with the spirit's influences, and labour to see and feel their sinful, guilty, condemned, helpless, undone state. For this end they must forsake vain company, leave their quarrelling and contention, drop their inordinate worldly pursuits, and abandon every thing which tends to keep them secure in sin, and quench the motions of the spirit; and for this end must they read, hear, meditate, and pray; compare themselves with God's holy law, try to view themselves in the same light that God does, and pass the same judgment upon themselves; that so they may be in a way to approve of the law, and to admire the grace of the gospel; to judge and condemn themselves, and humbly to apply to the free grace of God, through Jesus Christ, for all things, and through him to return to God.

Thus we have gone through what was proposed under this *third general head.* We have considered the necessity there was of satisfaction for sin, and of a perfect righteousness.—

We have considered what satisfaction for sin has been made, and what righteousness wrought out, and wherein their sufficiency consists. We have considered how the way of life has been opened by the means; and we have considered what methods God has actually entered upon for the recovery of lost sinners to himself. And thus, now, upon the whole, we see upon what grounds the great Governor of the world considered mankind as being in a perishing condition, and whence his designs of mercy originally took their rise, and what necessity there was for a Mediator and Redeemer, and how the way to life has been opened by him whom God has provided: and so may now pass to the next thing proposed.

SECTION VII.

SHOWING THE NATURE OF A GENUINE COMPLIANCE WITH THE GOSPEL.

IV. To show *the true nature of a saving faith in Christ.* And because, by the whole, I am to explain the nature of the gospel, and of a genuine compliance therewith, therefore I will begin with a more general view of things, and afterwards proceed to a more distinct survey of faith in particular.

Now, a genuine compliance with the gospel, in general, consists in a spiritual and divine sight and sense of the great truths therein presupposed and revealed; and in a firm belief of those truths, and an answerable frame of heart; as is evident from 2 *Cor.* iv. 3, 4, 5. 1 *Thes.* ii. 13. *Matt.* 13. 23. *John* viii. 32.

It is *divine light*, imparted by the spirit of God to the soul, which lays the foundation of all. *Matt.* xi. 25. *Gal.* i. 16. 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. This *spiritual* and *divine light*, according to the language of St. Paul, *shines in the heart*, and consists in the *knowledge of* GLORY; 2 *Cor.* iv. 6.; that is, in a *sense* of MORAL BEAUTY; a *sense* of that beauty there is in the MORAL PERFECTIONS of GOD, and in all spiritual and divine things; that HOLY BEAUTY which is peculiar to spiritual, and divine, and holy things; of which every *unholy* heart is per-

fectly insensible. 1 *John* i. 3. 6. And by *it*, things are made to appear to us, in a measure, as they do to God himself, and to the angels and saints in heaven. And so, by *it*, we are made to change our minds, and are brought to be of God's mind concerning things. And so we are hereby disposed to understand, believe, entertain, and embrace the gospel. *John* viii. 47.

God, the great Governor of the world, who sees all things as being what they are, does, in the gospel, consider mankind as *perishing*; as fallen, sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless, and undone. He looks upon the original constitution with Adam as holy, just, and good; and that, by and according to that constitution, he might have damned the whole human race, consistently with his goodness, and to the honour of his holiness and justice. He looks upon the law of nature as holy, just, and good; and that, by and according to that, he might damn a guilty world, consistently with his goodness, and to the honour of his holiness and justice. Now, by this *divine light*, we are brought to look upon things as God does, and to have an answerable frame of heart.

Again; God, the great Governor of the world, who sees all things as being what they are, does, in the gospel, consider a guilty world as lying at his mercy. He saw that he was under no obligations to pity them in the least, or in the least to mitigate their punishment; much less under any obligations to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life; and still much less under any obligations, by his holy spirit, to subdue and recover such obstinate rebels, who hate him and his Son, his law and his gospel, and are perfectly averse to a return. He saw a guilty world lie at his mercy, and that he was at liberty to have mercy or not to have mercy, according to his sovereign pleasure; and that it was fit, and becoming his glorious Majesty, to act as a sovereign in this affair. And now, by this *divine light*, we are brought to look upon things as God does, and to have an answerable frame of heart.

Again; God, the great Governor of the world, who sees all things as being what they are, at the same time that he designs mercy for a guilty world, does consider a Mediator as being

necessary to answer the demands of the broken law, and secure the divine honour. In such a *perishing* condition he sees mankind; so guilty, so justly condemned, that it would be inconsistent with the divine perfections, and contrary to all good rules of government, to pardon and save such wicked, hell-deserving rebels, without some proper atonement for their sin, and suitable honour done to his law. But the honour of his holiness and justice, law and government, is sacred in his eyes, and of infinite importance, and must be maintained: better the whole world be damned, than they in the least be sullied: And now, by this *divine light*, we are brought to look upon things as God does, and to have an answerable frame of heart.

Moreover, God, the great Governor of the world, who sees all things as being what they are, views his only begotten Son as a meet person for a mediator, and himself as having sufficient power to authorize him to the work. Of his sovereign, self-moving goodness, he, in his infinite wisdom, contrives the whole scheme; lays the whole plan, and puts his design in execution; the door of mercy is opened; the news of pardon and peace is sent through a guilty world, and all are invited to return home to God through Jesus Christ: and God looks upon this way of salvation as being glorious for God, and safe for the poor sinner. And now, by this *divine light*, we are brought rightly to understand these things, and look upon them as God does, and believe them, and to have an answerable frame of heart.

Lastly, God, the great Governor of the world does, in the gospel, consider our return unto him through Jesus Christ, not only as a *duty* to which we are under infinite obligations, but also as a *privilege* of infinite value; and, in this view of the case, he *commands* and *invites* us to return. And now, by this *divine light* we are brought to look upon this also as God does, and to judge it the *truest* and *happiest* thing in the world to return unto him through Jesus Christ, and to have an answerable frame of heart. For,

By this *light* we come to have a right view of the most high God: to see him, in a measure, as the saints and angels in heaven do: to see him in his infinite greatness and majesty, and in the infinite glory and beauty of his nature. And hence

we are made sensible that he is infinitely worthy of the highest esteem, reverence, love, delight, and of universal obedience. And hence we see, that we, in particular, are under infinite obligations to love him with all our hearts, and obey him in every thing; and that to do so is the happiest thing in the world; that not to do so, is infinitely wrong, and deserves an infinite punishment. And thus we see the grounds of the law of nature: the reasons from whence it results, and, with all our hearts consent to it, and approve of it as holy, just, and good. And this naturally lays the foundation for us rightly to understand, and heartily to approve of the original constitution with Adam. And while we behold God in his infinite glory, and view the law as holy, just, and good, and see our infinite obligations perfectly to conform unto it; now our universal depravity and infinite ill desert appear in a clear and divine light. Hence it appears we lie at mercy, and that it is fit he should have mercy on whom he will; that it becomes the Majesty of heaven to act as a sovereign in this affair. And it appears that there is no motive in us to excite his compassions, but infinitely to the contrary: and hence the heart is prepared to discern the freeness of divine grace, and to perceive that the goodness of the divine nature must be self-moving; and also to understand the need there is of a mediator to secure the divine honour: for creatures so bad appear too vile to be relieved, unless justice may first be satisfied; it is contrary to law, and contrary to reason, that they should. And while we view these things, and have a divine sense of them on our hearts, we are hereby prepared to understand the way of salvation by free grace through Jesus Christ, as revealed in the gospel. And now a sense of the glorious freeness of divine grace: the excellence and sufficiency of Christ, and the readiness of God to be reconciled to returning sinners through him, lays the foundation for faith and hope*. And all this while there is

* All these things, (although it takes considerable time to express them in order,) may, for substance, instantly open to view, and the soul immediately acquiesce in the gospel-scheme and close with Christ; *instantly*, I say, upon DIVINE LIGHT's being imparted to the soul. But the mind, in that solemn and awful hour, may especially fix only upon some particulars; and so a remembrance of these may remain, while other particulars, which were then in view, cannot afterwards be recollected. Hence, some may doubt whether their *first act of faith*

secretly enkindling in the heart a most genuine disposition to return home to God: to love him and live to him, arising from a sense of the ineffable glory and beauty of the divine nature: for he appears glorious in holiness, justice, goodness, and grace; and glorious in his sovereignty and in his majesty, as supreme Lord and high Governor of the whole world. Upon the whole, with utmost solemnity, as being in ourselves infinitely unfit for the divine favour, we venture our eternal ALL upon Jesus Christ as *Mediator*, relying on his worth and merits, and trusting to the mere free mercy of God through him, for pardon, and grace, and glory; and hence are encouraged and emboldened, with our whole hearts, to return home to God through him, and give up ourselves to God for ever, to love him and live to him, and live upon him for ever, lamenting that ever we sinned against him, resolving to cleave to him with all our hearts, and never, never to depart from him. *Heb.* iv. 16. and x. 19—22. *Eph.* ii. 18. *John* xiv. 6. *Rom.* iii. 24, 25, 26. And thus, by this *divine light*, imparted by the spirit of God, is the soul finally brought to unite to Christ by faith, and to return home to God through him. John vi. 44, 45. *No man can come to me, except the Father draw him. They shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me.* And from what has been said concerning the nature of the gospel, it is self-evident that herein consists a genuine compliance therewith. For all this is only to see things as being what they are, and to be affected and act accordingly.

REMARK 1. This is peculiar to a genuine compliance with the gospel, and that whereby it is specifically different from all counterfeits; namely, its being founded in, and resulting from this *divine light*; whereby we are brought, not merely in speculation, but in heart, to look upon things as God does. He sees all things *as they are*; and therefore when any poor

was *right*. The best way to remove such fears, is to live in the exercise of faith every day; for when these views, and a consciousness of them, become habitual, our scruples will cease of course. The special nature of our *faith* may be learnt from the *after acts*, as well as by the *first act*; for the *after acts* will be of the same nature with the *first*, let our *faith* be true or false,

sinner is brought to a right view of things, i. e. to see them *as they are*, he must, by consequence, look upon them as God does. Now, all others being blind and ignorant in scripture-account, hence this true sight and sense of things is very peculiar and distinguishing. And hence we may observe that it is mentioned as being peculiar to the good-ground hearers, in Mat. xiii. 23.: *That they heard the word and* UNDERSTOOD *it*. And Christ intimates that none but his true disciples KNOW THE TRUTH. *John* viii. 31, 32. And the gospel is again and again said *to be hid* from all others. *Mat.* xi. 25. 2 *Cor.* iv. 3. And they only have it *revealed* unto them. *Mat.* xi. 25. They only have *the vail taken off from their hearts.* 2 *Cor.* iii. 14—17. And they only *behold with* OPEN FACE. *Ver.* 18.

2. This spiritual and divine light lays the foundation for a new kind of belief of the gospel. A sight of the divine beauty and glory of the gospel-scheme, convinces and assures the heart that it is divine, and indeed from God, and not a cunningly devised fable. This is an evidence peculiar to the regenerate, and, of all others, it is unspeakably the most satisfactory. (See this largely explained and proved in Mr. *Edwards'* treatise on religious affections, p. 182. 199.)

3. Regeneration, faith, repentance, and conversion, are, in their own nature, connected together, and so they are in this representation. In regeneration we receive this divine light; this new spiritual sense of things. Our eyes are opened, and we are brought out of darkness into this *marvellous light*; and so come to have a right view of God; of ourselves; of Christ, and of the gospel-way of salvation by free grace through him. This spiritual illumination lays the foundation for faith, repentance, and conversion. It discovers the grounds of faith, of repentance, and conversion; and we believe, we repent, and convert. *Repentance towards God,* and *faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ,* always go together; *Acts* xx. 21. and the gospel calls sinners to *repent,* and *be converted,* as well as to *believe* in Christ. *Acts* iii. 19. Those, therefore, who seem to have much *light,* and *faith,* and *joy,* but have no *repentance,* nor do turn to God with all their hearts, are deluded.

4. Spiritual light and true faith are always in proportion. A spiritual sense of God; of ourselves; of Christ, and of the

gospel way of salvation by free grace through him, lays the foundation for faith; and faith naturally results therefrom; as has been observed, and as is evident from *John* vi. 45.: and therefore, from the nature of the case, they must be in equal degree in the heart. And therefore, those who pretend to live by faith, when they are spiritually blind and dead, do but deceive themselves. Nor is what they plead from Isai. l. 10. at all to the purpose. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord; that obeyeth the voice of his servant; that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the Lord, and stay upon his God.* Because, 1. The persons here spoken of were not spiritually blind and dead, but had a spiritual sense of God and divine things on their hearts; for they *feared the Lord*, and *obeyed his voice;* so that they lived in the exercise of grace, and walked in the ways of holiness, which, without spiritual light, had been impossible. And, 2. What they were in the dark about, was, how, or by what means, the children of Israel should ever be brought out of the *Babylonish* captivity, back again to *Zion:* which they knew God had promised, but they could see no way wherein it could be brought about. In this respect they *walked in darkness*, and could *see no light*, and therefore they are exhorted to put their *trust in the Lord*, whose wisdom, power, and faithfulness, are infinite. This is evidently the meaning of the words, as is manifest from the scope and tenour of the prophet's discourse through all the ten preceding chapters, which was calculated for the support and comfort of the godly in the Babylonish captivity, by assuring them of a return *. Nor is what is said about Abraham, that *against hope he believed in hope*;

* The three first verses of the next chapter, (*Isai.* li. 1, 2, 3.) do, I think, confirm the above interpretation of *Isai.* l. 10. although, I doubt not, the prophet's discourse, through the above said ten chapters, has a further look to the *Messiah's* kingdom, and our redemption out of *mystical Babylon.* But let the words be considered in either view, or only considered in themselves absolutely, it is plain they never were designed to comfort *stoney ground* hearers, when their religion is all worn out, and they become *dead, blind,* and *carnal,* and so full of doubts and fears. Nor do they mean to embolden such "firmly to believe they are in a good state, though ever so much in the dark, i. e. though they see no grace in their hearts, nor signs of any." For the words are directed *only* to those *who fear the Lord, and obey the voice of his servant.*

nor what is said by St. Paul; *We walk by faith, and not by sight*, any thing to their purpose; unless they suppose that Abraham and Paul, and the primitive christians in general, were as dead, and blind, and carnal, as themselves. The truth is, that this *blind faith* is the very thing which the Apostle *James* calls a *dead faith*.

5. Evangelical humiliation and true faith are likewise always in proportion. Evangelical humiliation consists in a sense of our own sinfulness, vileness, odiousness, and ill-desert, and in a disposition, thence resulting, to lie down in the dust full of self-loathing and self-abhorrence, abased before the Lord, really accounting ourselves infinitely too bad ever to venture to come into the divine presence in our own names, or to have a thought of mercy from God on the account of our own goodness. And it is this which makes us sensible of our need of a mediator, and makes us desire to be found, not in ourselves, but in Christ; not having on our own righteousness, but his. No further, therefore, than these views and this temper, prevail in us, shall we truly discern any need of Christ, or be heartily inclined to have any respect to him as a mediator between God and us. There can, therefore, be no more of true faith in exercise, than there is of this true humility. When men, therefore, appear righteous in their own eyes, and look upon themselves as deserving well at the hands of God, on the account of their own goodness, they can feel no need of a mediator, nor at heart have any respect to Christ under that character, *Luke* v. 31. This condemns the faith of the *self-righteous formalist*, who depends upon his being conscientious in his ways, and upon his sincerely endeavouring to do as well as he can, to recommend him to God. And this condemns, also, the faith of the *proud enthusiast*, who appears so *good* in his own eyes; so far from a legal spirit; so purely evangelical; so full of light and knowledge, humility and love, zeal and devotion, as that, from a sense of his own goodness, and how greatly beloved he is in the sight of God, he is encouraged and elevated, and feels greatly emboldened to come into the presence of God, and draw near, and come even to his seat, and use familiarity and boldness with God as though he was almost an equal. Such are so far from any

true sense of their need of Christ, as that they rather feel more fit to be mediators and intercessors in behalf of others, than to want one for themselves. And it is the way of such, from that great sense they have of their own goodness, to make bold with God, and to make bold with Christ, in their prayers, as if they felt themselves pretty nigh upon a level. Of all men in the world, I am *ready* to think that God looks upon these the worst, and hates them the most. (*Luke* xviii. 9—14. *Isai.* lxv. 5.) But did they know it, they would hate him as entirely as he does them. Hypocrites of all sorts fail in this point: they see no real need of Christ; they are not so bad but that, to their own sense and feeling, they might be pardoned and saved by the free mercy of God, without any mediator. Hence they do not understand the gospel; it is all foolishness to them. 1 *Cor.* ii. 14.

6. It is a spiritual sense and firm belief of the truths of the gospel which encourages the heart to trust in Christ. *John* vi. 45. That the goodness of God is infinite, and self-moving; that Christ, as Mediator, has secured the honour of God, the moral Governor of the world, and opened a way for the free and honourable exercise of his grace; that through Christ, God, the supreme Governor of the world, is actually ready to be reconciled, and invites all, the vilest not excepted, to return to him in this way. These truths, being spiritually understood and firmly believed, convince the heart of the safety of trusting in Christ, and encourage it so to do. *Heb.* x. 19. *Mat.* xxii. 4.

7. Saving faith consists in that entire trust, reliance, or dependance on Jesus Christ, the great Mediator, his satisfaction and merits, mediation and intercession, which the humbled sinner has, whereby he is emboldened to return home to God in hopes of acceptance, and is encouraged to look to and trust in God through him for that complete salvation which is offered in the gospel. The opposite to justifying faith, is a self-righteous spirit and temper, whereby a man, from a conceit of, and reliance upon his own *goodness*, is emboldened and encouraged to trust and hope in the mercy of God. *Heb.* x. 19. 23. *Luke* xviii. 9. 14. and accordingly, when such see how *bad* they really are, their faith fails; they naturally think *that God* cannot find in his heart to show mercy to such.

8. *Faith emboldens the heart.* In a legal humiliation, which is antecedent to spiritual light, the sinner is brought to a kind of despair. The things which used to embolden him, do now entirely fail: he finds no good in himself; yea, he feels himself dead in sin; and upon this his heart dies within him. *I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.* Rom. vii. 9. And by spiritual light, in evangelical humiliation, his undone state, in and of himself, is made still more plain. But now faith emboldens the heart, begets new courage, lays the foundation for a new kind of hope; a hope springing entirely from a new foundation. Heb. x. 19. 22. *Having, therefore, brethren,* BOLDNESS *to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.* By faith the heart is emboldened. 1. *To return home to God, in hopes of acceptance.* A spiritual sight and sense of the ineffable beauty of the divine nature begets a disposition to look upon it the fittest and happiest thing in the world to love God with all the heart, and be entirely devoted to him for ever; and enkindles an inclination to return, and everlastingly give up and consecrate ourselves unto him. "But may such a wretch as I be the Lord's? Will he accept me?" Now the believer, understanding the way of acceptance by Christ, and seeing the safety of it, ventures his ALL upon this sure foundation, and hereby is emboldened to return. Heb. xi. 6. *He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him;* i. e. first: He must see what God is; behold him in his glory, or he cannot, in a genuine manner, desire to come to him. And secondly: He must see that he is ready to be reconciled unto and to save those who, from a genuine desire to be his, do heartily return to him through the Mediator he has appointed; or else he will not dare to come. But when both these are seen and believed, now the soul will return, and come and give up itself to God, to be the Lord's for ever. 2. Faith in Christ emboldens the heart to look to and trust in the free grace of God through him, for all things that just such a poor creature wants; even for all things offered in the gospel to poor sinners. Heb. iv.

16. *Let us, therefore, come* BOLDLY *to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace.* Pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace are the two great benefits of the new covenant; and these are the two great things which an enlightened soul feels the want of, and for which he is emboldened to come to God by Jesus Christ. *I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people,* saith the Lord in the new covenant; and *this is all my salvation, and all my desire,* saith the believer.

9. The word *faith,* in scripture, is evidently used in various senses. Or thus, there are various different exercises of a godly soul, all which in scripture are called *faith,* for I mean here to leave out all those sorts of *faith,* spoken of in scripture, which the unregenerate man is capable of. 1. It is the way of godly men to live under a spiritual sense of God, his being and perfections, and government of the world, and the glory, reality, and importance of divine and eternal things; even under such a *living sense* of these things, as that they are *firmly believed,* and are made to influence them as though they were seen. Hence they are said to *look at things which are unseen.* 2 Cor. iv. 18. *To see him who is invisible.* Heb. xi. 27. And are said *to walk by faith.* 2 Cor. v. 7. And this seems to be the meaning of the word *faith,* as it is used in Heb. xi. where we read of what Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses, did by *faith.* Their *faith* was *the substance of things hoped for, and evidence of things not seen;* i. e. it made divine and eternal things, as it were, subsist, in all their glory and importance, before their minds, and appear as evident as though they were seen, (*ver.* 1.) 2. It is the way of godly men to live under a spiritual sense of the divine all-sufficiency, whereby they are influenced *firmly to believe* that God is able to do all things for them, and be all to them, which they can possibly need in time and to eternity; by all which, they are influenced to live in a way of continual *dependence* upon him for all things. And this is what, in the book of Psalms and elsewhere, is called *trusting in the Lord, waiting* and *leaning upon the Lord, making him our refuge.* This temper is expressed in Psal. lxxiii. 25, 26. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I de-*

sire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth. But God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. And, ver. 28. *It is good for me to draw near to God. I have put my trust in the Lord.* 3. It is the way of godly men to live under a spiritual sense of God, as the great Governor of the world, to whom it belongs to maintain the rights of the godhead, and the honour of the law; and under a sense of themselves as poor sinners, worthy only of destruction, according to law and justice, and too bad to be pitied or to have any mercy shown them, without some sufficient *salvo* to the divine honour; and under a sense of Christ as a Mediator appointed to be a propitiation for sin, to declare God's righteousness and secure the divine honour, and so open a way wherein God might be just, and yet justify the sinner that believes in Jesus; even under such a living sense of these things, as that they are *firmly believed;* whereby they are influenced not to draw nigh to God in their own names, emboldened by their own goodness, but only in the name of Christ, *depending entirely* upon him, and *emboldened only* by his worth and merits, mediation, and intercession, to look for acceptance in the sight of God. Hence, because of this *dependance,* they are said to pray in *Christ's name.* John xvi. 23. To have *access to God by him.* Eph. ii. 18. To *come to God through him.* Heb. vii. 25. *To believe in God by him.* 1 Pet. i. 21. And are represented as being EMBOLDENED by his worth and merits, mediation and intercession, to approach the Majesty of heaven. *Heb.* iv. 16. and x. 19. And now this is called a *coming to Christ.* John vii. 37. A *receiving* him. John i. 12. A *believing in* Christ. John iii. 15. 16. A *believing* ON Christ. John iii. 18. 36. A *believing in* HIS NAME. John i. 12. And a TRUSTING *in* Christ. Eph. i. 12, 13. And *this* is *that act of faith* by which we are justified and entitled to life, as is evident from Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26. where it is, by the Apostle, called *faith in Christ's blood.* The Apostle considers God as the righteous Governor of the world, (*chap.* i. 18.) all mankind as being *guilty before God,* (chap. iii. 9—19.) Christ as being *set forth to be a propitiation for sin,* (ver. 25.) *That God might be just and yet justif* , &c. (ver. 26.) And affirms that we are *justified by free grace through the* REDEMPTION *that is in Jesus Christ,* (ver.

24.) *by faith without the deeds of the law,* (ver. 28.) being considered in ourselves as UNGODLY, (chap. iv. 5.) And this *justifying faith* he calls *faith in Christ's blood*; because it was principally by the *death* of Christ that the ends of moral government were answered, and so law and justice satisfied, and a way opened for the honourable exercise of divine grace. But although the word *faith* be thus used in scripture in these different senses, yet we are to remember that these various exercises of a godly soul are connected together, and always concomitant with one another; yea, and, in some respects, implied in each other: and perhaps sometimes all these actings of soul are designed by the word *faith*; nevertheless they are evidently, in their own nature, so distinct, as that they may be conceived of as distinct acts of the soul. And it may also be noted that the two first of these, viz. *a firm belief of divine truths,* and *a hearty reliance on the divine all-sufficiency,* are acts of faith common to angels as well as saints; but the last, which immediately respects Christ as Mediator, is peculiar to penitent, returning sinners. The two first are common to every holy creature; for all such do, in a firm belief of divine truths, live in an entire dependance upon God, the infinite fountain of all good: but the last is peculiar to *sinful* creatures, who, because they are *sinful,* need a mediator to make way for the honourable exercise of the divine goodness towards them. Those who never were sinners may receive all things, from the free grace and self-moving goodness of the divine nature, without a mediator; but those who have been sinners perhaps will receive all through a mediator to eternity.

10. A heart to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively; to love our neighbours as ourselves; to hate every false way; to be humble, meek, weaned from the world, heavenly minded; to be thankful for mercies; patient under afflictions; to love enemies; to forgive injuries, and, in all things, to do as we would be done by; a heart for all this, I say, is always in exact proportion to the degree of true faith; for the same views of our own wretchedness; of God; of Christ; of the way of salvation by free grace through him; of the glory, reality, and importance of

divine and eternal things, which lay the foundation for true faith, and always accompany the exercise of faith, do, at the same time, lay the foundation for this divine temper. And besides, this divine temper is what every true believer feels to be the fittest and happiest thing in the world, and, as such, longs for it, and goes to God to have it increased and strengthened; and, being unworthy to go in his own name *, he goes in Christ's name: so that the obtaining more and more of this divine temper is *one main end* of his exercising faith in Christ. And whatsoever he asks the Father in Christ's name, he receives. God is readier to give his Holy Spirit to such an one, than parents are to give bread to their children, (*John* xvi. 23. *Mat.* vii. 11.) and therefore every true believer does obtain the end of his faith; and not only has, but grows in this divine temper, and is governed by it, and brings forth fruit according to it: and thus *shows his faith by his works*, according to St. James' doctrine. *James* ii. And herein true faith stands distinguished from all counterfeits. Never had a hypocrite a spiritual sense of that ineffable beauty of the divine nature, which lies at the foundation of all the experiences of the true saint, and from whence all true holiness originally springs. The *formalist* may, from legal fears and merce-

* *Unworthy to go in his own name.* As thus, if, in prayer, I offer up this petition, "Lord, enable me to love thee with all my heart!" it implies, (1.) That I do not love God with all my heart, notwithstanding the infinite obligations I am under to do so; for which defect I am infinitely to blame, and deserve an infinite punishment; to be instantly driven from God's presence for ever, and spurned to hell as a creature fit only for destruction. (2.) It implies that all the external manifestations which God has made of himself to me in his works and word, and all the external means he has used with me, are not able to win my heart wholly to God; so great is my sottishness and alienation from the Deity, and love to the world and sin. And now, surely, such a vile wretch cannot have a thought of any mercy from God, on the account of any goodness in me; yea, rather I am too bad to be pitied, unless there be some sufficient *salvo* to the divine honour. How, therefore, can God give me the greatest of gifts, even the sanctifying influences of his Holy Spirit, but through the great Mediator, consistently with his honour as moral Governor of the world. Now, therefore, being thus unworthy to go to God in my own name, I go in Christ's name; as knowing that, through him, God can exercise his infinite, self-moving goodness to the vilest of creatures, consistently with his honour; although law and justice call for their immediate destruction, considered as in themselves.

nary hopes, be so strict and conscientious in his ways, as to think himself a choice good man: and the *enthusiast*, from a firm persuasion of the pardon of his sins, and the love of Christ, may be so full of joy and love, zeal and devotion, as to think himself a most eminent saint: but there is nothing of the nature of true holiness in either; for it is *self*, and nothing but *self*, that is the principal, centre, and end of all their religion. They do not believe in Christ, that through him they may return home to God, and be consecrated to him for ever, and obtain grace to do all his will. They do not know God, or care for him, but are wholly taken up about their own interest. That *Moravian* maxim, "That salvation consists in the forgiveness of sins," exhibits the true picture of the heart of the best hypocrite in the world; while that in 2 *Cor.* iii. 18. is peculiar to the godly. *We all with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory.*

11. And lastly. In true believers there is a principle of faith, which abides and grows, and perseveres to the end. That spiritual sense of God, of themselves, of Christ, and of the gospel-way of salvation through him, which lays the foundation for the first act of faith, becomes habitual. They have a spiritual understanding to discern spiritual things. (1 *Cor.* ii. 12.) They were once *darkness*, but are now *light in the Lord*; and hence they are called *children of the light and of the day*. Eph. v. 8. 1 Thes. v. 5. Spiritual light does not come upon believers like flashes of lightning at midnight; now and then a flash, and then as dark as ever again; but their light is habitual, like day-light. And from the first dawning of divine light at the hour of conversion, that day-break of heaven, their *light shines more and more*, year after year, *to the perfect day*. Prov. iv. 18. The flying clouds in the day time, although they may hide the clear shining of the sun for a while, yet they do not make it dark as in the night; yea, the thickest clouds are not able to do it. Believers are never destitute of a spiritual sense of God and Christ, and divine things, as other men are. They are *children* of the *light* and of the *day*; and not of the *night* and of *darkness*. The spirit of God does not come upon them by

fits, as it did upon Balaam; but *dwells* in them. (Rom. viii. 9.) And they *grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* 2 Pet. iii. 18. If at any time they should have no more sense of divine things than the unregenerate, they would be as much without grace; they would not differ from the *stony-ground hearers,* who *fell away.* And now their divine light being thus habitual, growing and persevering, hence their faith is so too. Through the course of their lives it is their way to grow more and more sensible of their sinfulness; the sinfulness of sin; their unworthiness, ill-desert, poverty, and absolute need of free grace and of Jesus Christ. And they also see more and more into the gospel-way of salvation; the glory and safety of it; its suitableness to exalt God, magnify the law, discountenance sin, humble the sinner, and glorify grace; and more and more come off from all self-dependence, to an entire reliance upon Jesus Christ, and the free grace of God through him; seeking to be found not in themselves, but in Christ; not as having on their own righteousness, but his. *Phil.* iii. 7, 8, 9. They more fully approve of the law of nature, and of the original constitution with Adam, as being holy, just, and good: they more fully get into a way of looking upon themselves as God does; as being naturally, and in themselves, fallen, sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless, and undone: they see more and more of their infinite obligation to perfect holiness, and of the reasonableness of eternal damnation being threatened for the least sin, and of the insufficiency of all their best doings to make any satisfaction for sin: the grace of God, as revealed in the gospel, appears more rich, and free, and wonderful: they feel more and more of their need of Christ, his worth and merits, mediation and intercession; and of their utter unfitness to approach the Majesty of heaven any other way but by him: they feel themselves more full of wants, and further off from any worthiness to receive, and yet more and more into the temper of humble beggars, and into a way of coming to God more entirely in Christ's name. At first conversion such a temper begins; and this temper grows like the *mustard-seed,* and spreads like *the leaven,* and is like *a well of living water,* which is never dry, but is *springing up into everlasting life.*

Thirdly, How can you pretend, all this while, to trust only in Christ for pardon and eternal life, when, as it is plain from your own words, you see no need of Christ? For if, as you say, "God cannot justly require any more of you than you can do," what do you want Christ for? You can do enough yourself. Do you want Christ to make satisfaction for your short-comings and imperfections? But, according to your scheme, God cannot require any more satisfaction than you can make yourself; for this would be to require more than you can do, and to damn you for not doing. Do you want him to purchase the favour of God and eternal life? But you can do all that God can require; for you can do what you can do, and that, according to your scheme, is all that God can require. Or, do you want Christ to purchase an abatement of the law? But if Christ had never died, you do not think that God could, in justice, require more of you than you can do. What need, therefore, upon your scheme, was there of Christ? And did he not die in vain? *For if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.* Gal ii. xxi. Now, can your faith in Christ be any more than a *mere fancy*, when, as it is evident, you see no need of him? And, besides, *Fourthly*, What good does your faith do you? Does it *work by love?* Does it *purify your heart?* Does it *overcome the world?* Why, nothing less. It only serves to keep you secure and quiet in an unrenewed state, and to make you hope all is well, while you keep on in a round of external duties, strangers to God and the divine life. In a word, your duties and your faith join together to keep conscience asleep, and to render you insensible of your need of Christ and of converting grace. *Rom.* ix. 30, 31, 32. Oh, how sad it is, so many thousands should be deceived in so plain a case! It can surely be attributed to nothing short of this, that *men love darkness rather than light*; they love to frame such a scheme of religion in their heads, as suits the temper of their hearts. And, because their scheme suits them, therefore they firmly believe it to be divine. But to proceed,

2. From what has been said, we may easily see the falseness of *the evangelical hypocrite's* faith, who, although he makes a much greater show, and is more confident, yet has

not a jot better foundation. He has been greatly awakened, perhaps, and terrified, and seemingly brought off from his own righteousness, and humbled, and then has received great light and comfort, and has had many an hour of joy and ravishment. For thus was the case: In the depth of his darkness and sorrow, light shined all around him; and, to his thinking, he saw heaven opened and the Lord sitting upon his throne, and Christ at his right hand, and heard those words, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven. Fear not, little flock, it is my Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Oh, thou afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours,* &c. Or, it may be, he saw Christ on the cross, with his blood running from his side, and hands and feet; or, perhaps he saw a light in his chamber. It may be, he had one scripture, and, it may be, ten or twenty going, until he was as full as he could hold, and even ready to cry, *Lord, stay thy hand.* As to all these things, there is an endless variety; but, in the following particulars, there is a greater agreement. (1.) They have a discovery of Christ's love to them in *particular;* that he died for them in *particular;* that their sins are pardoned, &c. (2.) The essence of their first act of faith consists in a firm persuasion that their sins are forgiven; that Christ died for them in particular, or the like. (3.) All their after-discoveries and after-acts of faith are of the same nature with the first. (4.) This faith, from a principle of self-love, naturally fills them full of joy, and love, and zeal, and lays the foundation of all their good frames, and of all their religion. (5.) Doubting the goodness of their state, when they are dead and carnal, is, in their account, unbelief, and a great sin, and to be watched and prayed against, as a thing of the most destructive tendency. Now, some, who have a few discoveries, do, in a few months, lose all their religion, and come to feel and live much like the rest of the world. Others hold out longer. Some, after they have lain dead one, two, three, five or ten years, just as it happens, will have what they call a new discovery, and be as full as ever; while others continue in their irreligious courses.

And here I may observe, (1.) That the greater discoveries, (as they call them,) they have, the more proud and conceited they are, and the more do they want to have all the town admire them. (2.) The longer they continue to be *lively*, the more do they grow in pride and self-righteousness; and feeling themselves to be exceedingly good, they are emboldened to make very free with the Almighty, as being his peculiar favourites, and the best of men. *God, I thank thee, I am not as other men.* (3.) And yet it is natural to esteem themselves some of the most humble creatures in the world. (4.) It is impossible to convince them of their error; because the immediate witness of the spirit of God, as they think, assures them that they are right: and, therefore, all who do not look upon things and feel just as they do, are certainly blind and carnal, and so not to be regarded: they are bound to believe God before man. Urge *scripture* against them, and they are unmoved; because the spirit does not tell them that it means so. The plainest texts are not regarded, if contrary to their spirit. Urge *reason* against them, and demonstrate a point ever so clearly, and they are unmoved; because that is all *carnal reason*. Take much pains with them, and be ever so kind and friendly, and they are the more established; because they think they are *persecuted*. Or, if they are sometimes shocked, and almost convinced, yet they are in a few days, more settled than ever, by a new discovery, and a multitude of scriptures misapplied by the prince of darkness, assuring them that they are right. And now they resolve never to doubt again, and get invincibly set in their way. (5.) If, after a while, they lose all their religion, and are dead and lie dead, for whole months and years together, yet still they are as confident as ever. "For," say they, "David, and Solomon, and Peter, fell, and the best are dead sometimes; and how long a good man may lie dead none can tell. God may leave his children out of sovereignty, and without Christ we can do nothing; we must wait for the spirit, and not call God's faithfulness into question, because of our deadness; as if his faithfulness depended upon our good frames." And so now, having, as they suppose, Christ to pardon their sins, and save their souls, and some lusts to content their hearts, they sleep on secure and quiet.

Or, if they are terrified at any time, and begin to doubt, *O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt?* or some such scripture, will quiet and hush all to sleep again. And thus, and after this sort, things go with them. And now out of such rotten hearts grow up all the Antinomian, Familistic, and Quakerish errors which have troubled the christian church. For they get their principles of religion, not out of the *Bible*, but out of their *experiences*; and are careful to cut out a scheme in their heads to suit the religion of their hearts: and because it suits them, therefore they firmly believe it. And because their scheme is not *rational*, and cannot bear to be examined by *reason*, therefore they cry down *reason*, and say it is *carnal*. And they cry down *human learning*; and the more ignorant, the more devout. And because their scheme is not contained in the *scriptures*, therefore they have no regard to the *plain meaning* of scripture, but turn all into *allegories*, and what they call the *spiritual meaning*; and so run into an hundred whims, such as best suit the temper of their hearts.

Now the great misery of this sort of hypocrites is, that notwithstanding all their terrors, yet they were never thoroughly convinced of their fallen, sinful, guilty, undone state by nature: and, notwithstanding all their discoveries, yet they are still spiritually blind, and neither know God, nor themselves, nor Christ, nor the gospel-way of salvation by free grace through him: and, notwithstanding all their confidence, and joy, and high religious frames, yet they are as destitute of faith, repentance, and holiness, as ever they were. And it is a LIE, which the *father of lies* has made them believe; which lies at the bottom of all their religion, and is the very foundation of it all. All their purest joy, and love, and zeal, arise from their *faith*. All their *faith* consists in *believing that their sins are forgiven*. And all the foundation which their *faith* is originally built upon, is an *immediate revelation*; the truth of which they dare not call in question, for fear of giving the lie to the Holy Spirit, from whom, they say, they know it came. But how could the spirit of God reveal it to them, that *Christ loved them*, and that *their sins were forgiven*, and hereby lay the foundation for their *first act* of faith, when, *before* the *first act* of faith, they were *actually* under *condem-*

nation, the *wrath of God*, and the *curse of the law*? John iii. 18. 36. Gal. iii. 10. The thing revealed to them was not true; and therefore was not from God, but from the devil. Now this false revelation laid the foundation for their faith, and their faith laid the foundation for their joy, and for all their religion. A spiritual sight and divine sense of the great *truths* presupposed and revealed in the gospel, is the foundation of the godly man's faith and holiness; but a particular thing, no where revealed in the Bible, is their foundation; yea, a *falsehood* that is directly contrary to what the scriptures plainly teach. And yet, alas! they know they are right; they are, they say, as certain of it as they are of their own existence. How great is the power of delusion! How awful is the case of a poor creature forsaken of God! 2 Thes. ii. 10, 11, 12. *They received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause, God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a* LIE. *That they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* But to conclude:

From what has been said concerning the nature of a true faith and a genuine compliance with the gospel, we may not only see the falseness of these two sorts of faith, but also of all other counterfeits, which are almost in an endless variety. For between these two extremes of a *legal* and *evangelical* hypocrite, there lie a thousand by-paths, in which poor sinners wander to everlasting perdition; in the mean while, blessing themselves that they are neither Arminians nor Antinomians, nor deluded as such and such are; although they neither know God, nor themselves, nor Christ, nor the way of salvation through him; and really are as destitute of faith, repentance, and holiness, as the most deluded creature in the world.

SECTION VIII.

SHOWING WHAT IS IMPLIED IN THE EVERLASTING LIFE PROMISED TO BELIEVERS, AND HOW FAITH INTERESTS US IN CHRIST.

I am now, in the last place,

V. To consider *the promise of everlasting life*, which is, in the gospel, made to true believers. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not* PERISH, *but have* EVERLASTING LIFE. In this *everlasting life*, is implied,

1. *The everlasting love and favour of God.* Whereas, *by the disobedience of one, many were made sinners*, and *judgment came upon all to condemnation*, by virtue of the original constitution with Adam, (*Rom.* v. 18, 19.) and whereas, by and according to the law of nature, *the whole world stands guilty before God.* (Rom. iii. 19.) Now, by virtue of a new constitution, established by the God of heaven, the great Governor of the world, called the *gospel*, or covenant of grace, it is appointed, and, as it were, confirmed by the broad seal of heaven, that any, whosoever they are, among all the guilty race of Adam, who fall in with this gospel-proposal, and venture their ALL upon this new plan; this new foundation; this precious corner-stone, Jesus Christ, the great Mediator between God and man, shall thenceforth stand free from that double condemnation, and be entitled unto the everlasting love and favour of God, the great Governor of the world. John iii. 18. Rom. v. 1, 2. *Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

2. The other part of this everlasting life consists in, and results from, *the everlasting indwelling of the Holy Spirit as a sanctifier.* This, which Adam lost by the fall, is, upon our union with Christ, the *second Adam*, by virtue of this new constitution, restored, never to be lost any more. John vii 38. *He that believeth on me, as the Scripture saith, out of his bel-*

ly shall flow rivers of living water. Ver 39. *This spake he of the spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.* And therefore the *gift of the Holy Ghost* is, by the Apostles, (Acts ii. 38.) promised upon the condition of faith*. And, therefore, as God did, of old, dwell in the holy of holies in the Jewish temple, in the clould of glory, so now, henceforth, does he dwell in the believer's heart by his Holy Spirit, as a vital principle and spring of divine life there. *John* xv. 1. 5. And hence believers are called *the temple of God.* 1 Cor. iii. 17. The spirit of God is said to *dwell in them.* (Rom. viii. 9.) to *lead them,* (ver. 14.) to give them an everlasting freedom from the power of sin, (*ver.* 2.) so that *sin shall not have dominion over them;* Rom. vi. 14. *and the water,* (says Christ,) *which I will give you, shall be in you a well of water springing up into everlasting life.* John iv. 14.

It is plain, from the whole tenour of the gospel, that the *everlasting love and favour of God,* together with the *everlasting indwelling of the Holy Spirit as a sanctifier,* which are the two great things which a poor sinner wants, are the two great things promised in the covenant of grace. St. Paul, having explained the nature of the gospel-way of salvation by free grace through Jesus Christ, and shown that faith is the only condition of the new covenant, in the four first chapters of his epistle to the Romans, proceeds to show the benefits accruing to believers. And *first,* they are *justified,* and have *peace* with God, (*chap.* v.) *Secondly,* they are delivered from the power of sin. (*chap.* vi.) And although they are, in this life, continually in a state of spiritual conflict and warfare, (*chap.* vii.) yet they are influenced, and led, and governed by the spirit of God, which dwells in them. (*chap.* viii.) And

* From the *nature* of *justifying faith,* it is evident that *regeneration* must be *prior* to the *first act* of it; but although the sinner be *regenerated* by the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit *before* faith, yet it is *after* faith and union with Christ, that the soul has a *covenant-right* to the indwelling of the holy spirit; which *covenant-right* lays a foundation for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to be *constant* and *everlasting;* and this lays a foundation for an *abiding* principle and proper *habit* of grace. So that, although *regeneration* be *before* faith, yet a *confirmed habit* of grace is *after.* It results from our union with Christ. *John* xv. 1—5. And is in scripture promised upon the condition of faith. *John* v. 24 vii. 38.

now all things shall work for their good, and they shall be brought to glory at last. (*ver.* 28—39.) So again, see both these summed up in *Heb.* viii. 10, 11, 12. *For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts. And I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.* Here is the everlasting indwelling of the Holy Spirit, together with what results therefrom. *For I will be merciful unto their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.* ver. 12. And here is the everlasting love and favour of God.

And now, seeing, by this new constitution, this covenant of grace, true believers are thus *entitled* to the everlasting love and favour of God, and to the everlasting indwelling of the Holy Spirit, as sanctifier, in the perfect enjoyment of both which, *eternal life*, in heaven, will consist; hence, therefore, they are said to *have life*, yea, to *have eternal life*, immediately upon their believing in Christ. 1 John v. 12. *He that hath the Son, hath* LIFE. John iii. 36. *He that believeth on the Son hath* EVERLASTING LIFE. John v. 24. *Hath* EVERLASTING LIFE, *and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from* DEATH *unto* LIFE. John xvii. 3. *This is* LIFE ETERNAL, *that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Eternal life is begun in them, and heaven begins to dawn in their souls. And believers, being thus made the subjects of the everlasting love and favour of God, and of the everlasting indwelling of the Holy Spirit, are hence called *the children of God.* John i. 12. For God loves them as *children*, and they love him as a *Father.* And this *filial frame of spirit*, whereby they are disposed to reverence, fear, love, trust in, and obey God as a *Father;* live upon him, and live to him as a *Father;* I say, this *filial frame of spirit* is called *the spirit of adoption*, in opposition to that *servile frame of spirit* they used to be under the bondage of, *before faith*, and *before they had received the Holy Ghost.* Rom. viii. 15. *For ye have not received the*

spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

And this filial frame of spirit being *peculiar* to believers; that which none but believers have, and which yet is common to all believers; and this filial frame of spirit being that wherein believers bear *the image of their heavenly Father, each one resembling the children of a King;* for they view things, according to their measure, as God does, and love what God loves, and make his interest their interest, and are taken up with the same designs; I say, this filial frame of spirit being such a *peculiar* and *remarkable* thing, and that wherein they so nearly *resemble* God, and being also the immediate product of the indwelling and influence of the Holy Spirit, therefore, in scripture, it is spoken of as the distinguishing badge of a true believer: as a *mark* whereby God's children and Christ's *sheep* are to be known. This is what is called *the seal of the spirit,* in Eph. i. 13. And this *seal* is the *witness, evidence,* and *proof* which the Holy Spirit gives to our *consciences, that we are the children of God.* Rom. viii. 16. This filial frame of spirit is what *satisfies* and *assures* the children of God. They feel the very temper of children towards God. They feel a heart to reverence and fear, love and honour him as a Father; a heart to go to him; to trust in him; to be in subjection to him, and obey him as a Father. And by this they know they are his children.

Marvellous is the change which the poor sinner passes through in that awful hour of inexpressible solemnity, when he first comes into the awful presence of the dread Majesty of heaven and earth, through Jesus Christ, the glorious Mediator, venturing his ALL for ETERNITY upon this sure foundation. And now, from this time forward, he is quite another creature, under quite new circumstances. As when orphan children, left without a guardian or a guide, from running into riot and indulging themselves in all extravagancies, are taken and brought into the family of a wise and good man, who makes them his children; instills new principles and a new temper into them, and puts them under a new discipline, by which all things become *new* to them; so, here, from being without God and without hope in the world, and from running

to eternal ruin, we are taken and brought into God's family: have a new temper given to us; have a new father, and are under a new government. God's fatherly eye is upon us every hour, and he is daily labouring to bring us up to his hand; to train us up to his mind; to make us such as he would have us be. He contrives, and takes all manner of ways, by his spirit, and by his providence, and by his word, to make us more serious, spiritual, and heavenly; more humble, weaned from the world, and devoted to God. And thus *he purgeth us, that we may bring forth more fruit.* John xv. 2. He enlightens, he leads, he teaches, he quickens, he strengthens, he comfort us. *Heb.* viii. 10, 11, 12. *Isai.* xl. 31. When we want it, he instructs us. 1 *John* ii. 27. *James* i. 5. When we want it, he corrects us. *Heb.* xii. 6. And when we need it, he encourages and comforts us. 2 *Cor.* xii. 9. When we love him and keep his commands, he manifests himself unto us. *John* xiv. 21. And when our spiritual enemies are too strong for us, and our heart and our strength fail, our steps are slipping, our feet just gone; in the distressing juncture he puts underneath his everlasting arms: he takes us by the right hand; he prevents us by his grace; and before we are aware, we have gotten the victory, and begin to say, *Whom have we in heaven but thee? And there is none on earth we desire besides thee. Our flesh and our heart faileth; but God is the strength of our heart, and our portion for ever.* And O, *It is good for us to draw near to God.* Psalm lxxiii. And if at any time we forsake him, he follows after us, and *visits our transgressions with the rod,* and *our iniquities with stripes;* but never breaks his covenant with us. *Psalm* lxxxix. 30—34. *He hedges up our way with thorns,* and brings us to a hearty return. *Hos.* ii. 6, 7. And thus *we are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation.* 1 Pet. i. 5.; and finally are brought to the full vision and perfect fruition of God to all eternity. *Rom.* viii. 30.

Now *faith* in Christ entitles us to all this, by virtue of that divine constitution which we call *the gospel,* or *covenant of grace;* by virtue of that new and living way of salvation which God, the great Governor of the world, has contrived and provided, ratified and confirmed, the sum of which is

contained in John iii. 16.; which constitution God has been pleased to confirm by an *oath*, to the intent *we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before us.* He has said, *He that believeth shall be saved*, and he has confirmed it by an *oath*, to remove all doubt, and to give the highest possible assurance. *Heb.* vi. 17, 18. And now, being assured that this way of salvation may be depended upon, as being contrived and confirmed by God himself; hence, here we rest secure and safe. We know that this new constitution must be from God, because the whole plan is altogether divine; it is just like God: God cannot but be pleased with it: it is perfectly suited to exalt God; to magnify the law; to discountenance sin; to humble the sinner, and to glorify grace; and if sinners are ever saved, it is infinitely fit that they should be saved in such a way, and in no other. There is such an apparent resemblance of the divine nature and perfections in this whole plan, as is sufficient to assure the heart that it is from God. None but God could be the author of it. 2 *Cor.* iv. 3, 4. 6. And being in the *first* place, assured that it is from God, we have, in the *second place*, the highest assurance that God will abide by it, and act according to it. For, *first*, we have his *promise;* and *secondly*, we have his *oath;* so that there can be no reasonable doubt remaining. And now, upon this foundation, does the true believer build all his hopes and expectations; here is the bottom of all: for if I am assured that, by divine grace, I do rightly understand the gospel, and am brought to a genuine compliance therewith, now, then, I am *safe*, if the *gospel* be TRUE, and if that way of salvation may CERTAINLY be depended on; if it be no *cunningly devised fable*, but a way of God's own contrivance, and which he will CERTAINLY abide by. A clear, rational, spiritual conviction and assurance of this, is the very *anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast.* Heb. vi. 19.

If mankind had remained in a state of *pure nature*, i. e. under no constitution at all; under nothing but merely *the law of nature*, i. e. to have been guided and directed to their duty, and to have been rewarded or punished by God, only and merely by and according to the reason and nature of things;

if this had been the case, then, so long as every individual should be continued in being by God, and should continue to love God with all his heart, and obey him in every thing, so long every individual would be perfectly happy: but then, God might, without injustice, let one or all drop into non-existence, if he pleased, and when he pleased, although perfectly holy. *Job* xxii. 2. and xxxv. 7. Or, if he was pleased to continue one and all in being for ever, yet, at what time soever any should commit the least sin, that soul should immediately sink down into an eternal hell. *Rom.* vi. 23.; a thousand years of perfect obedience, by the mere law of nature, not entitling to any promise for the time to come. God's giving and continuing being to us, and granting us advantages to know, and love, and serve him, would render us infinitely indebted to God; but our knowing, loving, and serving God could not bring him at all in debt to us. *Rom.* xi. 35, 36. Our doing so would naturally render us happy, so long as we should continue to do so; but if, at any time, we should be guilty of the least defect, all would be lost, and we undone for ever.

But then, by and according to the constitution with Adam, things were placed upon another footing. The eternal welfare of mankind was suspended upon another condition: for, according to this constitution, if Adam, the public head and representative of mankind, had remained obedient for some certain period of time, he and all his posterity would, by the free and gracious promise of God, have been entitled to everlasting life; as, on the other hand, if he sinned, all would be exposed to eternal death. But now, FAITH *in Christ* entitles us to eternal life, by virtue of a new constitution, called the *gospel* or *covenant of grace*, made and confirmed by the God of heaven.

The perfect obedience of Adam, had he stood, would not have entitled us to eternal life, notwithstanding he was our natural head, if he had not been made our representative by a divine constitution: so the perfect obedience and sufferings of Christ would not have freed us from condemnation, and entitled us to eternal life, whatever dependence we might have had upon him, if, by a divine constitution, it had not

been appointed and confirmed, that *he that believeth shall be saved.*

By and according to *the law of nature*, our own personal obedience would have recommended us to the favour of God, and laid the foundation of our happiness, so long as we should have continued in a state of sinless perfection. By *the first covenant*, the constitution with Adam, his perfect obedience through his appointed time of trial, would, by virtue of that constitution or covenant, have entitled us to everlasting life. By *the second covenant*, the perfect righteousness of Christ, the *second Adam*, entitles all true believers to everlasting life, by and according to this new and living way.

A perfect righteousness was necessary, according to the law of nature; and a perfect righteousness is insisted upon in both covenants. According to the law of nature, it was to be performed *personally*; but, according to both covenants, it is appointed to be performed by a *public head*. According to the first covenant, we were to have been interested in the righteousness of our public head, by virtue of our union to him as his posterity, for whom he was appointed to act. According to the second covenant, we are interested in the righteousness of Christ, our public head, by virtue of our union to him by faith.

Our *faith* is that whereby we *unite* to Christ; the act is an *uniting act*. We disunite, separate from, and renounce *that* to which we before were united, and did close with, and placed our hopes upon, *viz.* our own righteousness; and are no more emboldened by *that*, to come into the presence of God. And we unite to Christ, desiring to be found, not in ourselves, but in him; not in our own righteousness, but in his. *Phil.* iii. 8, 9. And from him we take encouragement to draw nigh to God; we come in HIS NAME. *Heb.* iv. 16. And now, by virtue of a divine constitution, established by the Governor of the world, all who thus unite to Christ by faith, are considered as being one with him, so as to have an interest in what he has done and suffered in the character of a Mediator, as a public person, so as, upon the account thereof, to be pardoned, and received to favour, and entitled to eternal life. *Rom.* v. 18, 19. *Eph.* i. 6. *Rom.* iii. 24, 25.

And now, this faith, this uniting act, being the *condition*, the *only condition*, required on our part, by the covenant of grace, we being *justified by faith without the deeds of the law*, hence *faith* is said to be *imputed to us for righteousness*; Rom. iv.; for *righteousness*, i. e. for that whereby we *stand right* according to the tenour of the new covenant, i. e. for a *full compliance* with the condition of the new covenant. As perfect obedience was a compliance with the covenant of works, so faith is a compliance of the covenant of grace. Now, as perfect obedience, through his whole time of trial, would have been imputed to Adam for *righteousness*, i. e. for a *full* compliance with the condition of that covenant; so now faith is imputed for *righteousness*, i. e. for a *full* compliance with the condition of this covenant. For St. Paul had but just been proving that we are *justified by faith* ALONE, *without the deeds of the law*; and now *this* being the ONLY condition required, therefore he says *it* is accounted as a *full* compliance with the new covenant; i. e. it is *imputed for righteousness*. It being the *only* thing required as a condition of life, by the covenant of grace, hence it is looked upon in the sight of God accordingly, as being a *full* compliance with that covenant. The covenant of works insisted upon perfect obedience, because Adam was to have been justified merely by, and wholly upon the account of, his own virtue and goodness. And the covenant of grace insists upon *faith alone, without the deeds of the law*, because now we are justified, merely by, and wholly upon the account of Christ's virtue or righteousness, without regard to any goodness in us. *But to him that* WORKETH NOT, *but believeth on him that justifieth the* UNGODLY, *his faith is counted for righteousness*, (Rom. iv. 5.) i. e. for a FULL compliance with the new covenant *without the deeds of the law*. For, as to a *legal righteousness*, Christ is *the end of the law for righteousness to them that believe*; Rom. x. 5. And, in that sense, we are not to be found in our own righteousness, but in his. *Phil.* iii. 8.

Thus, according to the law of nature, every man would have been justified by his own personal righteousness; and according to the first covenant, every child of Adam would have been justified by Adam's righteousness, as public head: and

according to the second covenant, every believer is to be justified by Christ's righteousness, as another public head. The first of these ways takes its rise from the reason and nature of things; but the second and third from the positive appointment of God. The angels, it seems, were dealt with according to the first of these ways; only their state of probation, through grace, was not to be perpetual; for, no doubt, those that stood are now in a confirmed state: but mankind are dealt with according to the second and third.

The first of these ways a fallen world pretend some liking to; but the other two have given great offence. "How is it right we should be condemned for Adam's sin? Or with what propriety can we be justified on the account of Christ's righteousness?" is the language of very many. "It is unjust to condemn me for the sin of another, and absurd to justify me for another's righteousness," say they. And as to the first of these ways, they would have the law abated in what it requires, and quite disannulled as to its threatening death for the least sin. They would have what they call sincere obedience admitted as a condition of life, and repentance to be accepted in case of sin: so that an apostate world are naturally equally at enmity against the first, second, and third, rightly understood. For they think it full as unjust that God should damn us for the least defect of perfect obedience, as for Adam's first sin. And it is nothing but divine light can bring the heart of a sinner sincerely to approve of the law of nature, of the constitution with Adam, and of the gospel with Christ. For, (1 Cor. ii. 14.) *the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* He does not discern the ground and reason of the law of nature, being blind to the infinite beauty of the divine perfections; and so is incapacitated to have a right view and sense of the nature of the first covenant or the second. And being a stranger and an enemy to God, he also naturally doubts whether he has full power and rightful authority to make such constitutions: he dislikes the constitutions; he questions God's authority to make such: their being so plainly held forth in the Bible, tempts many to call even the truth of that into *question*; and some are driven quite to open infidelity.

There is a secret infidelity in the hearts of unregenerate men. They do not love that divine scheme of truths revealed in the Bible, nor cordially receive it for true. Men love to cut out a scheme of religion in their heads, to suit the temper of their hearts. And from this root do all the false and erroneous principles which fill the christian world originally take their rise. (2 *Thess.* ii. 10, 11, 12.) But when he that commanded the light to shine out of darkness shines in the heart, and gives spiritual light, then the reasonableness, beauty, and glory of the whole scheme appear, and the very resemblance of the divine perfections is to be seen in every branch of it; and now it is cordially believed. (*John* viii. 47.) And hereby a solid foundation is laid for a real conformity to the law, and a genuine compliance with the gospel; in both which true religion does consist.

Thus we have gone through what was proposed. And we see why God, the great Governor of the world, did consider mankind as perishing, fallen, sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless, and undone: and we see that his design of mercy originally took its rise from the mere self-moving goodness of his nature, and sovereign good pleasure: and we see the necessity there was of a Mediator, and how the way of life has been opened by him whom God has provided: and we see wherein a genuine compliance with the gospel does consist, and the nature of a true faith in Christ: and we see what is implied in the everlasting life that is promised to believers, and how faith interests us in the promise, and how that the covenant is, in all things, well ordered and sure. And now there is a wide field opened for a large improvement, in many doctrinal and practical inferences and remarks. For,

1. It is very natural to make the same observations here, with regard to a genuine compliance with the *gospel*, as were before made with respect to a real conformity to the *law*: for, from what has been said, we may easily see wherein consists that life of faith in Christ, by which true believers live; that all unregenerate men are entirely destitute of this true faith in Christ; yea, diametrically opposite thereunto in the temper of their minds, and therefore cannot be brought to it but by the almighty power and all-conquering grace of God: that there

is nothing in them to move God to do this for them, but every thing to the contrary; that God is at perfect liberty to have mercy on whom he will, according to his sovereign pleasure; that it is reasonable to think that the same sovereign good pleasure, which moves him to be the author, will move him to be the finisher of our faith; that true faith, being thus specifically different from every counterfeit, may therefore be discerned and known, &c. But because I have already been larger than at first I designed, therefore I will omit these, and all other remarks which might be made; and will conclude,

2. With only this one observation, viz. That if these things be true, which have been said concerning the nature of faith and the way of salvation by free grace through Christ, and concerning that view of things which the true believer has, then nothing is more plain and evident than that the true believer must needs feel himself to be under the strongest obligations possible to an entire devotedness to GOD, and a life of universal *holiness*. Every thing meets, in that view of things which he has, to bind his soul for ever to the Lord. One main design of the gospel was to make men holy; and it is, in its nature, perfectly well adapted to answer the end. For now all the natural obligations we are under to love God and live to him, are seen in a divine light; such as arise from the infinite excellence of the divine nature; God's entire right to us, and authority over us: and their binding nature is exhibited in a more striking and affecting manner in the gospel than in the law; the *cross* of Christ gives a more lively representation of the infinite evil of sin than all the thunders of Mount Sinai: and a sight of our natural obligations are attended with a sense of all the additional sacred ties, arising from the infinite goodness of God to a guilty, ruined world, in providing a Saviour; from the dying love of Christ; from the free gift of converting grace; from pardoning mercy; from God's covenant love and faithfulness, and from the raised expectations of eternal glory; all which must join to beget a right sense of sin, as being a thing, in itself, the most unfit, unreasonable, and wicked, as well as infinitely disingenuous and ungrateful to God, and concur to make it appear as the worst of evils; the most to be hated, dreaded,

watched, and prayed against. And a humble heart, full of self-diffidence, and under a sense of the divine all-sufficiency, and in a firm belief of the truth of the gospel, will most naturally, and, as it were, continually apply itself, by faith and prayer, to God through Christ, to be kept from all sin, and to be preserved to the heavenly kingdom: so that those views which the true believer has, have the strongest tendency to universal holiness, and do naturally lay a solid foundation for it. And those views are not only maintained in a greater or less degree, from day to day, by the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit, which dwells in them; but are increasing and brightening through the course of their lives: so that as the grand design of the gospel is to make men holy, so it is perfectly well adapted, in its nature, to answer the end. And therefore *he that is born of God sinneth not;* and *how shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?* And such like scriptures must, in the nature of things, be found to be true, in the experience of every real believer. Nor can any but graceless hypocrites be emboldened, by the doctrines of free grace, to sin, as it were, upon free cost; and a double vengeance will they pull down upon their guilty heads.

Particularly, the whole frame and tenour of the gospel naturally tends to excite us to an universal *benevolence* to mankind, in imitation of the infinite goodness of the divine nature; and even to be benevolent and kind to the evil and unthankful, and to those in whom there is no motive to excite our good will, but much to the contrary; and to love our enemies, and bless them that curse us, and do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us. It is impossible, when we see the infinite beauty of the self-moving goodness of the divine nature, as exercised in the whole affair of our redemption and salvation, towards creatures so infinitely vile, unworthy, and ill-deserving, but that we should love that glorious goodness, and be changed into the same image, and have it become natural to us to love enemies, and forgive injuries, and be like God. A *malicious christian*, a *spiteful believer*, is the greatest contradiction and the most unnatural thing.

That which has had no small hand in bringing the doctrines of grace into contempt in the world, as tending to licentiousness, is partly because they have not been rightly understood, and partly through the wicked lives of graceless hypocrites, who have made a high profession. What remains now, therefore, but that the people of God, by holy and exemplary lives, should convince the world that these are *doctrines according to godliness?*

I beseech you, therefore, by the mercies of God, that ye present yourselves a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service; for *you are not your own, but bought with a price;* and that *not of silver and gold, but of the precious blood of the Son of God;* and therefore *live no more to yourselves, but to him that died for you.* And *be ye followers of God as dear children. Blessed be God for the unspeakable gift of his Son.* AMEN.

A TREATISE

ON

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

PHILIPPIANS ii. 6, 7.

Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.

HOWEVER clearly any may imagine, the chief principles of natural Religion may be found out by the mere light of nature, yet all are agreed, that matters of pure revelation are to be learned only from the holy Scriptures: and our sentiments, as to such points, are to be formed entirely from these sacred writings. Nor is it doubted, but that we may safely believe what we find there plainly revealed, although the things are not fully understood. There are many things we know to be true, from experience and reason, in the natural and moral world, the manner of which we can by no means understand. The *husbandman* knows his grass and corn grow; the *philosopher* knows his soul and body are united; the *divine* knows that God has existed from eternity; but these things, and a thousand more, as to the manner of them, are beyond their comprehension: yet their certainty is not for this reason at all called in question. So if some things, plainly revealed in the Bible, are as to the manner of them beyond our reach, it can be no objection against their truth. If we connot conceive, for instance, what there is in the divine essence, which may lay a just foundation for one true God, (and we know there is but one,) to speak and act as though he existed in three distinct persons; yet if we find this to be in fact the case from consulting God's holy word, we may as firmly believe it, as though we could fully understand it. And if we

cannot conceive how the divine nature and the human should be united so as to constitute but one person; yet if we find, that, in fact, this is the case, there is an end to all doubt. For what God says may be as firmly believed, as what our eyes see. Nor is there any more reason to doubt his word, for want of a full understanding of the thing, than to doubt our eye-sight on the same account. Let us now, then, quite willing to form our sentiments from the holy scriptures, apply to these sacred writings, and inquire into the true character of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And perhaps, the words of our text may serve as a clue, to lead us into the true sense of what we find written, in the Old and New Testaments on this important subject.

"WHO being in the form of God." But when? plainly, *before* he took upon him the form of a servant: *before* he appeared in the likeness of man: i. e. *before* his incarnation. But *where* had St. *Paul* any accounts of Jesus Christ *before* his appearance in flesh? did he exist, did he indeed exist, antecedent to his incarnation? Yes, says our blessed Saviour, "before Abraham was I am." *John* viii. 58. In the writings of the Old Testament, no doubt, were the accounts referred to by the Apostle: for "they were they which testified of him," as our Saviour observed to the angry Jews in *John* v. who were enraged at his pretending to "be equal with God." *Ver.* 18. "Search the Scriptures," (said he,) to them I appeal to decide my true character, for "they are they which testify of me." *Ver.* 39. In those sacred writings it was that he appeared in "the form of God:" and spake and acted as thinking it "no robbery to be equal with God." All which divine glory and splendour he laid aside, at the time of his incarnation; and instead of it, took on him "the form of a servant," and appeared in "the likeness of men." Wherefore let us take a veiw of our blessed Saviour, as appearing, speaking, and acting in this two-fold capacity. (1.) "In the form of God." (2.) "In the form of a servant, and in the likeness of men:" That from the whole we may learn his true character.

I. Let us view our blessed Saviour, when he appeared in the "form of God," and spake and acted, as thinking it "no robbery to be equal with God."

And the *first* time he is brought into view, in the sacred writings, is in the *first chapter* of *Genesis*, as the *Almighty Creator* of heaven and earth. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." *Gen.* i. 1. For we are assured by one divinely inspired, that this God was the *God* who was "manifest in the flesh," even the very same being who "was made flesh and dwelt among us." For thus it is written, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the WORD WAS GOD, the same was in the beginning with God: ALL THINGS WERE MADE BY HIM, and without him was not any thing made that was made." *John* i. 1—3. For he created not only this earth, and this solar system; but by him were even "all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers, ALL THINGS were created by him." *Col.* i. 16. So that here he stands forth as the "CREATOR OF THE WHOLE UNIVERSE." And "his ETERNAL POWER AND GODHEAD are clearly to be seen by the things which he has made." (*Rom.* i. 20.) He is the CREATOR; and an higher character than this the MOST HIGH GOD never assumes to himself in the sacred writings. For this is the style of supreme DEITY. "Thus saith the Lord, that created the heavens, God himself that formed the earth and made it: I am the LORD, and there is none else." *Isai.* xlv. 18. And in heaven they worship the supreme God under this character. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created." *Rev.* iv. 11*.

* That Christ was not a *mere instrument* which God used in the work of creation, as the *Arians* pretend, is plain from this, that the Scriptures not only teach, that Christ was the very supreme God himself that created all things; (*Psal.* cii. 25. *Heb.* i. 10.) but also that *no instrument was used* in that work. It was wrought immediately by *God himself*. As it is written, "God himself formed the earth and made it." (*Isai.* xlv. 18. This, all grant, was the supreme God: And this God was Jesus Christ, as will soon appear.) "He alone spread out the heavens." (*Job* ix. 8.) Not by an instrument, but by *himself alone*, (*Isai.* xliv. 24.) with *his own hands*. (*Isai.* xlv. 12.) The scripture expressions the *Arians* urge to the contrary, shall be explained presently.

And, as Jesus Christ appears "in the form of God" in the *first chapter* of *Genesis*, calling universal nature out of nothing into existence; so likewise does he appear, and act, and speak, as thinking it "no robbery to be equal with God," in all the grand dispensations of divine providence, from the calling of *Abraham*, and forward, through all the *Jewish dispensation*.

Turn to the *third chapter* of *Exodus*, at the beginning, and there you may see, "the Angel of the Lord appeared to Moses, in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush*, and God called unto him out of the bush, and said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Now who was this God that thus spake to Moses? It was plainly the God who had appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and to whom they had built altars, and whom they had worshipped. To Jacob, in particular, as he was going to Padan-Aram, *Gen.* xxviii. 12, 13. "He dreamed, and behold a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and the angels of God [these were created angels] ascending and descending on it. And behold, the LORD [this was the supreme God] stood above it and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest to thee will I give it, and to thy seed," &c. And "Jacob called the name of that place Bethel," i. e. the House of God, *ver.* 19. "And he anointed a pillar, and vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, &c. then shall the Lord be my God," *ver.* 20—22. And when he was at Padan-Aram the same God appeared to him

* "Not a created angel, but the angel of the covenant Christ Jesus, who then, and ever was, God, and was to be Man, and to be sent into the world in our flesh, as a Messenger from God. And these temporary apparitions of his were presages or fore-runners of his more solemn mission and coming, and therefore he is fitly called an angel. That this angel was no creature, plainly appears by the whole context, and especially by his saying, *I am the Lord*, &c. The angels never speak that language in scripture: but, *I am sent from God*, and *I am thy fellow-servant*, &c. And it is a vain pretence, to say, that the angel as God's ambassador speaks in God's name and person. For what ambassador of any king in the world did ever speak thus, *I am the King*, &c. Ministers are God's ambassadors; but if any of them should say, *I am the Lord*, they would be guilty of blasphemy; and so would any created angel too, for the same reason."—*Poole in Loc.*

again, and is called the *Angel* of God. *Gen.* xxxi. "And the angel of God spake to me in a dream," *ver.* 11. This was not a created angel; for he said, *ver.* 13. "I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and vowedst a vow unto ME*." And to this God he afterwards *built an altar*, (*chap.* xxxv. 1.) and he calls upon *this God, this angel, to bless the lads*, (the two sons of Joseph,) a little before his death. (*Chap.* xlviii. 15, 16.) Now, who was this sometimes called *God*, sometimes the *Angel of God*? It was, if we may give credit to his own declaration, "The God of Abraham (*chap.* xxviii. 13.) and the God of Isaac." And this was the God who now appeared and spake to Moses in the bush, and who afterwards gave the law from Mount Sinai. And of him, even of this very same God, David speaks in the 68th *Psalm*, *ver.* 7, &c. "O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness, the earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of the Lord: even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel, *ver.* 17. The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place, *ver.* 18. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men," &c. And now, who was this?

* *God the Father* is never called the *angel of God*. But the *God of Bethel* is called the *angel of God*. Therefore the *God of Bethel* is not *God the Father*. The *God of Bethel* is the same who is called the *angel of the covenant* in *Mal.* iii. 1. But that *angel of the covenant is Christ*, as is plain from *Mark* i. 2 Therefore the *God of Bethel* was *Christ*. The *God of Bethel* was the God who appeared to Abraham, (*Gen.* xii. 1—7.) to Isaac, (*Gen.* xxvi. 24, 25.) to Jacob, (*Gen.* xxviii. 13. xxxi. 13.) to Moses, (Exod. iii. 2—6.) on Mount Sinai, (*Exod.* xx. 2.) and is usually called the *God and King of Israel*, through the Old Testament. But the *God of Bethel* was *Jesus Christ*. Therefore *Jesus Christ* was the *God* and *King of Israel*.—If Jesus Christ was the *God* and *King of Israel*, then may St. Paul be justified in representing him as the creator of the universe, *Col.* i. 16. And in applying to him, in his epistles, what was evidently spoken of the *God* and *King of Israel*, in the sacred writings of the Old Testament. Compare *Psal.* lxviii. 18. with *Eph.* iv. 8. And *Psal.* cii. 25. with *Heb.* i. 10, &c. And our blessed Saviour may be justified in laying down his life, rather than to give up his claim. And there was more truth in the title set up over his head when on the cross, (*Jesus of Nazareth the* KING OF THE JEWS,) than his crucifiers were aware of; For had they *known, they would not have crucified the* LORD OF GLORY.

Turn to the 4th *chapter* of *Ephesians,* and there an inspired Apostle tells us, that it was Jesus Christ, *ver.* 8. It was He "who ascended up on high, and led captivity captive."

So that it was *Jesus Christ,* who appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to Moses in the burning bush, and on mount Sinai. And He appeared in the "form of God," and spake in the language of supreme deity, as thinking it "no robbery to be equal with God," saying, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me." *Exod.* xx. And what could he have said more than this; to set up thus for supreme God, and enjoin that none should be worshipped but himself?

And this God, who thus brought Israel out of Egypt, and gave the law from Mount Sinai, even he was "the KING of the Jews," their *civil chief.* For their government was a *theocracy,* and God was their KING, as King *George* is King of *Great-Britain.* And therefore, when in the days of Samuel they desired to have a king from among themselves, like the rest of the nations, God said, (1 *Sam.* viii. 7.) "They have rejected ME, that I should not REIGN over them." (See also 1 *Sam.* x. 18, 19.) This was in their hearts; for they were weary of God's government, and did not like to be in a state of such entire dependence on him, but wanted a king of their own. However, God did not give up his government over them, nor grant them a king, in the sense they desired; but only nominated and constituted one to be his vicegerent, to be his deputy, to govern for and under him, therefore called *the Lord's anointed,* God himself still their King. Now it was at Mount Sinai God became their King, and they covenanted and promised to be his loyal and obedient subjects. *Exod.* xix. 3. 8. But *that God* was *Jesus Christ,* as has been before proved. Therefore *Jesus Christ* was *the* KING *of the Jews,* and they were his peculiar people. And to this St. John evidently alludes in those words, *John* i. 11. "He came to his own," his own people and nation, over whom he had reigned, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." Yea, look up, and view him on the cross, and read the

superscription put over him, and that will declare who he is, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. (See *John* xii. 15. *Zech.* ix. 9.)

And as their God was their king, their civil chief; so it was suitable he should have a *palace* built him, that he might dwell among them. And accordingly by his appointment the *tabernacle* was built in the wilderness. And there he dwelt, in the holy of holies, as their God and King, giving out laws and orders from above the mercy-seat. In allusion to which St. *John*, speaking of the same God, says, "the word was made flesh and tabernacled among us," (for so it is in the original.) *John* i. 14. And this God who thus dwelt in their tabernacle, and whom they tempted and tried forty years in the wilderness, St. *Paul* testifies was *Jesus Christ.* 1 *Cor.* x. 9. "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents." (See also *Isai.* lxiii. 9. compared with *Exod.* xxiii. 20. xxxiii. 14.)

Afterwards, in the days of Solomon, a *temple* was built, exceeding grand and glorious; however, not equal to his infinite greatness: for "the Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens could not contain him." (1 *Kin.* viii. 27.) But yet in this temple he condescended to take up his abode, "in the cloud of glory which filled the house." (2 *Chron.* v. 14.) And there he dwelt as *God and King of the Jews**. In remembrance of which, and conscious to his own dignity, our Saviour, in the days of his flesh, was filled with indignation to see the temple, once his holy dwelling-place, turned into an house of merchandize, and he drove out the people. And being questioned for this his conduct, he answered, "Destroy this temple, (speaking of his body,) and in three days I will raise it up." *John* ii. 19. As if he had said, "I am the God who

* Solomon, in his prayer at the dedication of the temple, speaking to the God and King of Israel, said, "for thou, even thou, ONLY knowest the hearts of all the children of men." 1 *King.* viii. 29. This being peculiar to the God of Israel. 1 *Sam.* xvi. 7. *Psal.* vii. 9. *Jer.* xi. 20. xvii. 10. xx. 12. "And all the churches shall know, that I AM HE," says our blessed Saviour, "that I AM HE, which searcheth the reins and heart." *Rev.* xi. 23. i. e. that I am that very being, formerly known by the name of the God of Israel, to whom *alone* this character belonged. *All the churches shall know it.*

once dwelt in your temple, now I dwell in this body; this is now my temple; destroy it, as I foresee you will, and in three days I will raise it from the dead; and thereby give you full proof who I be, and by what authority I do these things."

To Abraham he sometimes appeared as a *man*. (*Gen.* xviii. 1, 2.) to Moses, in a *flame of fire* in the bush. To all the host of Israel, in a *pillar of cloud* by day and *of fire* by night, from the time they went out of Egypt till they came to Mount Sinai. On the Mount he took up his abode till the tabernacle was built, and his appearance was as *devouring fire*. *Exod.* xxiv. 17. After the tabernacle was built, that became the place of his residence; and in a *pillar of cloud* by day and *of fire* by night, he led the Israelites through all the wilderness, till he had brought them into the holy land; and the tabernacle was set up at Shiloh, (*Josh.* xviii. 1.) and there he dwelt till the days of Eli, (1 *Sam.* iii.) when, for the wickedness of the children of Israel, he forsook Shiloh: (1 *Sam.* iv. *Psal.* lxxviii. 60.) as he afterwards did the temple of Solomon. (*Jer.* vii. 14.) and after the *Babylonish* captivity, this token of the divine presence was never more seen. But the pious Jews were assured by the last *prophet* under that dispensation, after the building of the second temple, that their *God* and *king* would return to their temple again. *Mal.* iii. 1. "The LORD whom ye seek," longing for his presence as in former days, "shall suddenly come to His temple," where he used to dwell; "even the messenger, (or angel,) of the covenant." But when he "came unto his own, his own received him not." (*John* i. 11.) for his ancient glory was laid aside, and he appeared in the form of a servant, and in the likeness of men. Wherefore they put him to death for claiming to be "the Son of God and king of the Jews;" not knowing that he was the LORD OF GLORY. 1 *Cor.* ii. 8. See *Hag.* ii. 7. 9.

BUT if we want any further evidence, that Jesus Christ was indeed the very GOD and KING of Israel, let us turn to the sixth chapter of Isaiah, where we shall find the *prophet* in a vision, seeing "the LORD sitting upon a throne high and lifted up," as sole monarch of the universe, and worshipped by the heavenly hosts as supreme God, crying, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, the whole earth is full of

thy glory*." And then turn to the twelfth chapter of *John*, forty-first verse, and we shall find, that this *God* was JESUS CHRIST. "These things," (viz. the things contained in *Isai.* vi. 9, 10.) "said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him."

And if we would see the same thing confirmed over again, let us read the forty-fifth chapter of *Isaiah* throughout, where we have the SUPREME *God*, the *God of Israel*, saying, *ver.* 5. "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God besides me. *ver.* 6. There is none besides me: I am the Lord, and there is none else. *ver.* 11. Thus saith the Lord, the HOLY ONE of Israel. *ver.* 12. I have made the earth, and created man upon it; I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens. *ver.* 18. Thus saith the Lord, that created the heavens; God himself, that formed the earth and made it; I am the Lord, and there is none else. *ver.* 21. There is no God else besides me. *ver.* 22. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." And if after all this God-like language, this was *Jesus Christ*, St. *Paul* might well say, "who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God;" (nor can we have a plainer comment on his words, nor can we be at a loss for their true meaning,) for he could not have appeared more as SUPREME GOD, nor possibly spoken in more

* *Holy, Holy, Holy*, three times. This vision was a vision of one God in three persons. Of God the *Father*, *Rom.* xi. 8. Of God the *Son*, *John* xii. 41. Of God the *Holy Ghost*, *Acts* xxviii. 25. The THREE who said, "Let US make man in OUR image." *Gen.* i. 26. Whose name was pronounced *three* times in the Old Testament blessing. *Num.* vi. 24, 25, 26. As the *three* persons are distinctly mentioned in the New Testament baptism. *Matt.* xxviii. 19. And in the New Testament blessing. 2 *Cor.* xiii. 14. And it is observed by an ancient Jewish writer, that in several texts in the Hebrew Bible, God is called by *three* names. His words are as follows: "Thus it is said, *Exod.* xx. 5. I am the Lord thy God, a jealous God. [JEHOVAH, ELOHIM, EL, are the words used.] *Three*, answering to the *Three* by which the world was made. And thus the children of Gad, and the children of Reuben say, *Jesh.* xxii. 22.: EL, ELOHIM, JEHOVAH: EL, ELOHIM, JEHOVAH, *he knoweth*. And why are these mentioned twice? Because by them the world was made, and because by them the law was given." Thus far the author of *Midrash Tillim*. See Bp. Kidder's *Demonstration of the Messiah*. Part III. p. 84.

decisive language than this*. And yet nothing can be plainer than that St. *Paul* understood the GOD speaking through the whole chapter, to be *Jesus Christ*. For those concluding words in the twenty-third verse, "I have sworn by myself, that unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear," he twice expressly applies to *Jesus Christ*. Once in *Rom.* xiv. 10, 11. "*It* is written, every knee shall bow to me." And again in *Phil.* ii. 10, 11. "At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow."

Yea, the *inspired writers* of the *New Testament* seem constantly to consider the *God* and *King of Israel*, who in the beginning created the heavens and the earth, as the very same Being, who afterwards dwelt in flesh, and was called *Jesus Christ*, from the liberty they take to apply to *Jesus Christ*, in their writings, what was so evidently spoken of the *God* and *king of Israel*, in the sacred writings of the Old Testament. To mention but two instances more. In all the 150 *Psalms*, there are none which seem more plainly to speak of the SUPREME GOD than the 97th and 102d. And yet both these are considered in the New Testament as speaking of *Christ*, and accordingly are applied to him. The 97th *Psalm* begins with, "the Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice:" and an *inspired writer* considers it as a representation of the glorious reign of the *Messiah*. For, says he, (*Heb.* i. 6.) "when he bringeth the first-begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him:" referring to the 7th *verse* of the 97th Psalm, "worship him, all ye Gods." And in the 102d *Psalm*, speaking of the SUPREME GOD, the *Psalmist* says, (*ver.* 25, 26, 27.) Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them

* The GOD that speaks in this chapter, is the God *who created the universe.* Ver. 18. The God, who was known by the name of "the God of Israel, *ver.* 3. that is, the God who brought *Israel* out of *Egypt*, and led them through the wilderness. And the God who delivered the Jews out of the *Babylonish captivity*, *ver.* 13. And he affirms over and over, "I am the Lord, and there is none else; there is none besides me, there is none besides me." Of this very same God, we read Isai. xl. 3. applied to Christ. Matt. iii. 3. and Isai. lii. 7. applied to Christ, *Rom.* x. 15. and *Isai.* xl. 10, 11. applied to Christ, John x. 11. and Isai. xli. 4. xliv. 6. xlviii. 12. applied to Christ, Rev. i. 17. xxii. 13.

shall wax old like a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." Which is expressly applied to *Jesus Christ*, in *Heb.* i. 10, 11, 12*.

Wherefore, from what has been said, it is natural to observe,

1. That the GOD and KING of Israel we read of in the *Old Testament*, is the *very same being* who afterwards became incarnate, and is called by the name of JESUS CHRIST in the *New Testament*†; i. e. JESUS OF NAZARETH *was really* THE KING OF THE JEWS. So certain as the writers of the New Testament were divinely inspired, so certainly may this be depended upon. Therefore,

2. It is beyond us to imagine any evidences of the Divinity of Christ, which could possibly have been given, more clear and striking than those which have been already given. In the beginning he created the heaven and the earth, even all things were created by him and for him. And he was the God of *Abraham*, the God of *Isaac*, and the God of *Jacob*; whom they wor-

* There are comparatively but few passages in the Old Testament, in which we may be certain, that it is God the Father, who speaks, or is spoken of. There are but few passages which could not have been applied to Christ, with as much apparent justice, as those already applied to him by the inspired writers of the New Testament. If Christ was not the God and King of Israel, how can they be justified in what they have done? But if he was, the consequence is plain.

† "But what difference is there, then, between God the Father and God the Son?" I answer, They are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory. *John* x. 30. "I and my Father are one." Compared with *John* xiv. 7, 8, 9, 10. And yet when we are baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," (*Matt.* xxviii. 19.) and observe how in the Gospel-dispensation the Father sustains the dignity, and stands for the rights of the Godhead, (*Rom* iii. 25.) the Son becomes incarnate, and is set forth to be a propitiation for sin, and the Holy Spirit enlightens and sanctifies sinners: I say, when we observe these representations in the sacred records, it becomes evident, that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, although they are but *one God*, (1 *John* v. 7.) plainly act as though they were *three distinct Persons*. And if our reason cannot find out *how* they are *three*, and yet but *one*; and if God has not thought it needful to instruct us in this point; yet so far as is revealed, so far we may believe; and that with a faith sufficiently distinct to lay a foundation for practice. The believer may now, through the mediation of the Son, have access, by the assistance of the Spirit, to the Father. *Eph.* ii. 18.

shipped, and to whom they built altars. He appeared to *Moses* in the burning bush as the supreme God, and spake the language of supreme deity from Mount Sinai. In the tabernacle and temple he dwelt in the *form of* God, and always spake as thinking it no robbery to be *equal with God.* To *Isaiah* he appeared as the Monarch of the Universe, and was worshipped by the heavenly hosts as such. And often he repeats it, "I am the Lord, and there is none else, and beside me there is no God." And therefore *swears by himself*, there being no greater to swear by, (*Heb.* vi. 13.) *that every knee shall bow to him.* Had he been truly and indeed by nature SUPREME GOD, what could he have done, or what could he have said, to have it made more manifest?

3. If after all, he was not by *nature God,* but a being *infinitely inferior;* not the CREATOR, but a *creature;* the Jewish dispensation, which was professedly designed to establish the worship of the ONE TRUE GOD, in opposition to all others, was really calculated to establish idolatry, (for aught I can see,) and that for ever. For he appeared in the form of God, and was taken to be supreme God, and enacted it as the first and chief of all his laws, that no God should be worshipped but himself. So that to deny his divinity, is to say, that the God of the Hebrews was an impostor, and to declare *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses,* and all their *Prophets,* to be deluded idolaters: for him they all believed to be supreme God, and him they worshipped as such.

4. But on the other hand, granting the Old and New Testaments to be divinely inspired, we may behold the manifold wisdom of God in laying out his grand plan as he has done. To God all his works were known long before the foundation of the world. And among other things, the incarnation, and the death of Christ as a propitiatory sacrifice for sin, were full in the divine view. Now what methods should be taken to render mankind, and the whole intellectual system, sensible of the infinite dignity of him who died on the cross? "Go," says the eternal FATHER to his SON, "Go, first create the world for which thou art to die, and the whole system over which thou art to reign, that how deep soever thine abasement may be, thine eternal power and Godhead may be to be clearly

seen by the things thou hast made. Go, appear to *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, in the form of God, and speak to *Moses*, and on Mount Sinai, as plainly thinking it to be no robbery to be equal with God, and dwell in their tabernacle and temple, and reign as God and King among them; that when in the fulness of time thou shalt appear in the form of a servant and in the likeness of a man, and bleed and die on the cross, thy true character may still be known. That when I come to perform this greatest of all my works, to give my only begotten Son to die for the world, it may be understood by frail mortals, what it is I have done*."

God foresaw, his appearing in the form of a servant, and in the likeness of men, would, unless there was some method taken to hinder it, induce mankind to think him but a mere man; and so prevent their seeing into the sublime nature and glory of the christian dispensation. In his infinite wisdom, therefore, he appointed him such works to do, previous to his incarnation, as might effectually determine his true

* That the SON was employed by the FATHER as his agent to create the universe, seems to be implied in that manner of speaking in Eph. iii. 9. "Who created all things by Jesus Christ," and in Heb. i. 2. "By whom he made the worlds." And that his creating the world manifests him to be possessed of ETERNAL POWER and GODHEAD, is plain from Rom. i. 20. And that the work of creation, and his other works recorded in the Old Testament, were designed to ascertain his true character, as being by nature GOD, in the view of frail mortals, notwithstanding the greatness of his intended abasement, is evident from the inspired writings of the New Testament; as they abundantly improve them to this purpose. Other kinds of beings God has employed in his dealings with a fallen world, viz. *angels* and *men*. And proper care has always been taken to ascertain their true character, as *mere creatures*, in the sacred writings. So *Moses* appears but a *mere man*, whatever high titles he had sometimes given him. And the *angel* employed by Christ, to communicate to St. *John* the wonderful and glorious visions and revelations he had in the Isle of *Patmos*, appears to be but a *mere creature*, (Rev. xxii. 9.) and he made conscience of informing St. *John* in his true character. But Christ appears in the form of God, and speaks and acts as thinking himself supreme God, through a long period of three or four thousand years. And granting him to be really such, there could not have been a better method to determine his true character to our view, and prevent our entertaining too low thoughts of him, on account of his appearing in the form of a servant, and in the likeness of a man. If now we cannot give credit to his words, when he says, "I and my Father are one:" yet surely we may to his works, while we view him as the Creator of the universe and as the GOD and KING of the Jews.

character. At first, his disciples themselves hardly believed him to be supreme God, or that he was to die, to make atonement for the sins of the world: for their eyes were not yet opened to understand the scriptures of the Old Testament, in which both these points were set in the strongest light. The very night before he suffered, it is plain, his disciples had but a feeble sense of his supreme Godhead. He had before said, that "he and his Father were one:" (*John.* x. 30.) but they did not fully understand him. He now says, "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also; and from henceforth ye know him and have seen him." (*John.* xiv. 7.) But they hardly knew what he meant. Therefore *Philip*, being one of them, says, "Lord, show us the FATHER, and it sufficeth us. (*ver.* 8.) Jesus saith unto him, have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father: and how sayest thou, show us the Father? (*ver.* 10.) Believest thou not, that I am in the Father and the Father in me?" But when afterwards their eyes were opened to understand the scriptures of the Old Testament, and in all those sacred pages to behold him in the form of God, speaking and acting as supreme Deity, now their faith was fully confirmed. Indeed in the days of his abasement, while his divinity was so much concealed, his divine glory at times shone into their hearts, and they "beheld his glory, (for instance on the Mount, *Mat.* xvii.) as the glory of the only begotten Son of God." (*John.* i. 14.) And sometimes under a divine influence they cried out, "Thou art the Son of the living God." (*Mat.* xvi. 16.) But in general their sense of his divinity was but feeble; so that after his death they even doubted his being the true *Messiah.* (*Mark* xvi. 14.) They knew not what to make of things. (*Luke* xxiv.) But after the days of *Pentecost*, when the Holy Spirit, who inspired the writings of the Old Testament, was so plentifully poured out upon them, they never appear to doubt again; but as in their writings, so no doubt in their preachings, they take the utmost liberty to apply passages in the Old Testament, evidently spoken of the supreme God, the Creator of the universe, the King of Israel, to Jesus Christ; and without scruple call him, "Immanuel, God, the true

God, God manifest in the flesh, *yea*, God over all blessed for ever*."

It is written in *Isai.* ix. 6. *His name shall be called* WONDERFUL. And indeed, of all things that ever happened in the whole intelligent system, this is the most astonishing, that the ETERNAL GOD who created the universe should become incarnate, and die on the cross. That the *babe* in the manger was "the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Creator of the ends of the earth!" He looked like another child; he grew in stature like another child; and when grown, he appeared in fashion as a man; his ancient glory all laid aside; to appearance, a man of sorrow, despised, condemned, hated, ridiculed, the laughing-stock of many in town and country, and those the most rich and honourable; at last, crucified as a malefactor. And was this the ETERNAL JEHOVAH! THE GOD OF THE WHOLE UNIVERSE! this mean man! this crucified criminal! Well might his name be called WONDERFUL. O the manifold wisdom of God, in appointing his SON, previous to his incarnation, to appear in the form of God, and speak and act as thinking it no robbery to be SUPREME GOD, through a period of three or four thousand years, as preparatory and introductory to this astonishing abasement; that there might be sufficient external evidence, with certainty, to determine his true character, when appearing in circumstances so infinitely below his real dignity! But it is time to proceed, as was proposed,

II. To take a view of our blessed Saviour "in the form of a servant, in the likeness of men."

As MAN, he had an *human body*, which, from the smallness of an infant, grew up into the stature of a man. And an *hu-*

* And if his disciples had so little sense of his true character, as supreme God, is it in the least credible, that the man spoken of in *Mat.* xix. 16. who called him *good Master*, had so much as one thought of his supreme Godhead? far from it, no doubt. It does not appear that he thought him to be the Messiah. But our Saviour knew what he himself was, and pitied the man, and said, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one God." As if he had said, "You call me *good*. Do you know who I be, or what you say? there is none good but God. Do you think I am God?" Words well contrived to put him on a further inquiry into our Saviour's true character.

man soul, in all respects liks ours, sin only excepted. (*Heb.* ii. 16, 17.) As *man*, God was his Father; even as he is the father of the whole creation in general, and as he is the father of all good men in particular: and in a still more eminent sense. And God was his God. As he said, "I ascend to my father, and your father, to my God and your God." (*John* xx. 17.) As *man*, he was dependent on God, and prayed to him, and praised him. As *man*, he had no ability to work miracles: but, *the Father*, saith he, "that dwelleth in me, he doth the works." (*John* xx. 10.) As *man*, he loved the young man in the gospel for his humane disposition and respectful behaviour. He groaned at his friend *Lazarus'* grave. He wept over *Jerusalem*; and was in an agony and prayed in the garden; and cried on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!"

As *man*, he grew in knowledge and wisdom, and in favour with God and man, (*Luke* ii. 52.) and yet was at an infinite remove from *absolute omniscience*: yea, he did not so much as know when the day of judgment would be. (*Mark* xiii. 32.) The DEITY, who was the FATHER * of the man Christ Jesus, how

* By the FATHER is sometimes meant the *first person* in the Trinity, as in *Mat.* xxviii. 19. 1 *John* v. 7. But at other times, is plainly meant the DEITY, without reference to any distinction of persons, as in *John* iv. 23, 24. 1 *John* ii. 15, &c.

OBJEC. "But if Jesus Christ was God and man, in one person, how could that one person say, that he knew not the day of judgment? for if he did not know, as man, yet he did, as he was God."

ANSW. It was usual for our Saviour to speak after this manner. *John* x. 15. "I lay down my life for the sheep." Now how could that one person say, "I lay down my life?" Was the divine nature to die? and yet was not *that nature*, himself? Certainly it was. For he adds, *ver.* 18. "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." Certainly the human nature had not power to raise itself from the dead. So *John* viii. 58. "Before Abraham was, I am." But how could that be true? for, as man, he was short of 50 years old. So again, *John* iii. 13. "Even the Son of man, which is in heaven." Certainly the human nature of Christ was not *then*, nor ever had been in heaven. And if, consistent with truth, he might say, that the *Son of man is in heaven*, although the human nature never was there; he might as well say, the *Son knoweth not*, although the divine nature did know. The manner of speaking, when honestly attended to, instead of tending to mislead us, tends to set the very truth in a striking light, viz. that he was *very God*, and *very man*. And agreeable hereto we may observe, that the *same person* that says, *not the Son, but the Father only*, in *Mark* xiii. 32.

intimately soever united to him, had never imparted to him the knowledge of this thing. The union was such, as that he might justly be named IMMANUEL, (*Mat.* i. 23.) yet the *natures* remained *distinct*. And the *human nature* was not conscious to the ideas of the *divine*, only as they were imparted. This was the case when he dwelt on earth, notwithstanding his personal union to the second person in the trinity; and it is still the case now he is in heaven, notwithstanding his exaltation and glory; he knows not the secrets of the divinity any further than they are communicated to him. Therefore we have that expression in *Rev.* i. 1. "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him." And doubtless, it is simply impossible, that any creature should be conscious to the ideas of the DIVINITY, as a man is conscious to the thoughts of his own heart, by *immediate intuition*. But he was not only a *man*, but *also took on him*

The *form of a servant*. And as such, he received all his power and authority from his *father*, as he constantly declares, in all his instructions. For he came not *of himself*, nor to do *his own will*, nor to seek *his own glory*; but his *Father* sent him; and he spake and acted altogether as *his servant*. And as such, "his father was greater than he."* *Mat.* xxviii. 18. *John.* vii. 16, 17, 18. xii. 49, 50. xiv. 28*.

says also, *I and my Father are one.* John x. 30. And, *he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.* John xiv. 9. *The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.* (ver. 10.)

N. B. In this last text, he, distinguishing between his human and divine natures, calls his divine nature *the Father*. Therefore, when he says, (*Mark.* xiii. 32.) *Not the Son, but the Father only*, the sense is plain. Nor is it any objection against this, that Christ speaks of the Father as distinct from himself in both these instances. For in the same discourse, (*Mark.* xiii. 19.) he speaks of *God the Creator* as one distinct from himself. Yet himself was the *God that created* all things. However, himself was a creature too. See also *John* vi. 42.

* All the power and authority by which the Mediator acts, in the whole of his mediatorial work, is derived from the father. He acts wholly as his Father's vicegerent, and by his commission. "He can do nothing of himself." *John* v. 19. He gives gifts to his church, (*Eph.* iv. 8. *Psal.* lxviii. 18.) Sends the Holy Spirit, (*John* xiv. 16. 26. xv. 26.) Subdues all enemies, (*Rev.* xix. 11—21. 1 *Cor.* xv. 27.) raises the dead, (*John* v. 21. 25, 26.) and judges the world, (*ver.* 27.) wholly by this derived authority. And "it hath pleased the Father, that all fulness should dwell in him," *Col.* i. 19. And these texts here referred to, in-

And a principal command he had received of his *father*, was to "lay down his life for his sheep." (*John.* x. 15—18.) And such was his regard to his *Father*'s honour, and to the salvation of sinners, that he was obedient, even to the death of the cross. Wherefore his *Father* loved him, and in testimony of his love, highly exalted him, and, as Mediator, set him at the head of the universe, and made him heir of all things, (for, as *God*, he was by *an underived right*, Lord of all things before, *Isai.* vi. 1.) and gave him a name above every name, that to the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess, that Jesus is Lord, *to the glory of God the Father.* Nothing being more to the glory of God the *Father*, than so highly to exalt a servant, who had shown so great regard to his honour, and to the honour of his law, and government and sacred authority. And nothing being more to the glory of God the Father, than that the whole universe should bow to the name of his great vicegerent, exalted to sit at his own right hand, as a reward of his fidelity to his *Father*, while acting in the *form of a servant**.

Among all the servants of God, none ever did so much to the glory of God, nor ever showed such alove to righteousness and hatred of iniquity, as he, and none ever received so great a reward. He was "anointed with oil of gladness

stead of proving that he is not by nature God, (as the Arians suppose,) do only prove, that he, who was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, really "took on him the form of a servant." All mere creatures are, (like those born in a state of servitude,) God's servants from their very first existence. But he originally was not God's servant. He was at his own disposal, and became a servant by a voluntary act. "He *took* on him the form of a servant." It is no condescension for the most exalted angel in heaven to be God's servant; but it was infinite condescension for the Son of God to become a servant to his Father.

* None will think, that it would be to the honour of the supreme God, to give too high a seat, and too much honour to any of his servants. But methinks this was too much honour to be paid to a mere creature; for it is the *very honour* which the supreme God "swears shall be paid to himself." (*Isai.* xlv. 23.) And it is a maxim with the supreme God, "Not to give his glory to another." (*Isai.* xlii. 8. xlviii. 11.) But that saying of our blessed Saviour in *John* x. 30. removes the difficulty at once. "I and my Father are one." So now we may honour the Son even as we honour the Father." (*John* v. 23.) And it is as God would have it. It is to "the glory of God the Father."

above his fellows," (*Heb.* i. 9.) Above all his fellow-servants, whether angels or men, and however faithful to him that appointed them: none ever were, or ever will be exalted to so great glory.

For he sits at the *head of the universe*, even at "the Father's right hand, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion." (*Eph.* i. 20, 21.) And here, as his *father's* vicegerent, *God-man mediator king*, he is to reign till all his enemies are put under his feet, till the final judgment is over, and all the affairs of an apostate world are settled. And then he will, in testimony that he has acted all as his Father's servant, resign this delegated authority. And *God shall be all in all.* As his *Father's servant*, he received this authority, to destroy the works of the devil, to bring good out of all the evil sin had introduced, and put an end to all the disorder and confusion in the intellectual system, consequent on the apostacy of angels and men: and having finished his work, he resigns the kingdom to the *Father*, the first person in the ever-blessed trinity, to whom, as such, the government of the world properly belongs, and he shall take the kingdom, and reign over the universe for ever and ever. And Jesus Christ himself, as Mediator, shall be subject to him, as is suitable, that the *Godhead* only may be exalted, and as it really is, so it may appear to be, *all in all.* For while the *Father* reigns, the whole *Godhead* reigns in him. So that, while the SON, as Mediator, resigns the kingdom to him; yet, as GOD, he reigns in him, and for ever will. But his mediatorial government he resigns, (even that delegated authority, whereby, as his *Father's servant*, he had ruled the *universe*, in the capacity of *God-man mediator king*;) having finished the work which he was empowered and authorized to do*.

* OBJECT. 'But it is written, that Christ "shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever." *Luke* i. 33. "His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom." *Dan.* vii. 27. "His throne is for ever and ever." *Heb.* i. 8. And "he shall reign for ever and ever." *Rev.* xi. 15.

ANS. Christ, at present, as Mediator, reigns over the *whole universe.* All beings, the Father only excepted, are under his authority. 1 *Cor.* xv. 27. But when he has finished the work, for which he is invested with this *universal authority*, he will resign this *universal commission*, and the Father take the government of the *universe.* However, he will, as Mediator, still "reign over the

As *God-man mediator*, in two distinct natures, yet but one person, he was his *Father's servant*. As such, he became obedient unto the death. Therefore the church is said to be redeemed *with the blood of God*. (*Acts* xx. 28.) And *God* is said to have *laid down his life for us*. 1 *John*. iii. 16. And, as such, he ascended to heaven and led captivity captive; and therefore St. *Paul* applies what is spoken of God in *Psal*. lxviii. 18. to him, in *Eph*. iv. 8. And, as such, he was exalted to the highest glory in heaven, and every knee ordered to bow to him; and so what is spoken of God in *Isai*. xlv. 23. is applied to him, in *Phil*. ii. 10. For he was GOD as well as MAN, God-man, one person; and as God's servant, in the great work of redemption, he was obedient unto death; and as God's servant, was rewarded with this high exaltation.

Thus stands the character of Jesus Christ in the sacred writings of the *Old* and *New Testaments*: all which cannot be better summed up than in the words of the *Apostle*, who seems to have had all these things in his view. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father;" in whose name he administers his mediatorial kingdom, and to whose honour he professedly refers it.

house of Jacob, [his redeemed ones,] for ever." It is needful now, that angels should be under him, to be his ministering spirits; and that he should have full authority over earth and hell, for the good and safety of his Church. But then the Mediator will need the angels no longer for ministering spirits, to minister to the heirs of salvation, who will be all safe in heaven. Nor will he have any thing more to do with wicked men and devils. As for the wicked, their day of grace will be over; and neither they nor the devils can do any more mischief. Having shut them up in hell, he will give up the keys to his Father.

And thus we have, as was proposed, taken a view of Jesus Christ; *first,* as being in *the form of God,* and speaking and acting as thinking it no robbery to be *equal with God:* and then, as having taken upon him the *form of a servant,* appearing in the *likeness of men.* And have seen the method infinite wisdom took to ascertain his true character, that the greatness of his abasement might not mislead frail mortals, nor raise one suspicious thought of the infinite dignity of his person, as our GREAT IMMANUEL. And now, therefore,

1. What an infinite condescension was it in the eternal God, the Creator of the universe, who had appeared in the form of God, and spake and acted as thinking it no robbery to be equal with God, through a long period of three or four thousand years, to lay aside all his glory, and from being worshipped as supreme God, to become of no reputation, and even take upon him the form of a servant and the likeness of men! Well might St. *Paul* urge this example, as a powerful inducement, on all the disciples of Christ, to be full of love and condescension towards one another. *Phil.* ii. 1—5*.

But,

2. How ungrateful, yea, how impious would it be in us to take occasion from his appearing in the form of a servant, and in the likeness of men, *which was for our sakes,* to take occasion, I say, from this to call his DIVINITY into question. Especially, now since we are so plainly informed, by the Holy Ghost, who inspired the writers of the New Testament, that he is the very same God who in the beginning created the heavens and the earth, and appeared to *Abraham, Isaac,* and *Jacob,* to *Moses* and *Isaiah,* and who was believed to be *the supreme God,* and worshipped as such by all the *Patriarchs*

* But how does his argument lose all its force, as the *Arians* interpret and understand the Apostle's words! "Who being in the form of God, by being his minister and representative, did not proudly and vainly assume to be equal with God," &c. (thus *Chubb.*) For what condescension was it for a *mere creature,* as they say he was, not to aspire after supreme Godhead? Can a mere creature be looked upon as very condescending, because he is not as proud as satan himself? And can we suppose the inspired apostle would argue thus, *ver.* 8. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Jesus Christ," 'who being but a mere creature, was so very condescending, as not to pretend to be equal with God.' And yet this must be his argument, as they interpret his words.

and *Prophets*; only because he has laid aside his God-like form, and taken the form of a servant; and instead of speaking like a God from Mount Sinai, appears and speaks like a man: that we should immediately doubt his divinity, and look upon him as a mere man, when yet all this abasement was for our sakes! How must HE look upon it! How must HE resent it!

Just thus did the *wicked Jews*, (yet we are more to blame than they; because we have more light and better advantages to form a right judgment of his true character,) I say, just thus did the *wicked Jews*, when they charged him with blasphemy, for saying, "I and my Father are one." "Thou," (say they,) being a man, makest thyself God." Here was his *crime*, and here was their *proof*. (*John* x. 33.) He had, upon a like occasion, some time ago, referred them to the scriptures of the Old Testament in general, to decide his true character, (*John* v. 18. 39.) but to little purpose. He now therefore only refers them to a particular passage in the 82d Psalm, the 6th verse, saying, "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods. And if he called them gods," &c. i. e. "If the types, which were shadows, were called gods; the antitype, which is the substance, must be real God. If they had the *name*, he must have the *thing*. *For the scripture cannot*, in any particular, *be broken*. Not only all the prophecies, but also all the types of the Messiah must be verified in him. You have no reason therefore to charge the Messiah with blasphemy, for claiming to be the Son of God*. And

* It is worthy our attention, that, in the sacred writings of the Old Testament, the chief rulers in Israel are called *gods*, (*Exod.* xxviii. 28.) and *children of the* MOST HIGH; (*Psalm.* lxxxii. 6.) which doubtless was, because they were designed to be *types of Christ*, who was by *nature God*, and the very *Son of God*.

For, as has been before observed, God himself was the king of the Jews. As it is written, "The Lord your God was your King." 1 *Sam.* xii. 12. And this God was Jesus Christ, as has been before proved. Then he appeared in the *form of God*. And that there might be a *shadow* of the state he was afterwards to be in, when in the *form of a servant*, acting as his father's delegate, he constituted the Jewish rulers to be his delegates then. He *anointed* and authorized them, (1 *Sam.* x. 1. xvi. 12, 13) as he was to be *anointed* by his Father, and *sanctified* and *sent* into the world, and to receive all his authority from him. They were called the *Lord's anointed*, the *Lord's Messiah*, (as it is in the original,) as that was the name by which he was to be known. He was to be called the

indeed, notwithstanding the meanness of my appearance in your eyes, while you behold me in the likeness of men, yet my works, which you also see, evidence my divinity. If you cannot give credit to my words, yet surely you may to the

Christ, i. e. the *Anointed*, the *Messiah*: for all are the same name and mean the same thing. *John.* i. 41. And they were directed from time to time by the *word of the Lord*, which *came to them* when they went to inquire of the Lord. (1 *Sam.* xiv. 18. 19. xxviii. 6. xxx. 7, 8. 2 *Sam.* ii. 1.) And as *gods* they sat *upon the throne of the Lord*, and reigned over the *kingdom of the Lord*. (1 *Chron.* xxix. 23. 2 *Chron.* xiii. 8.) In all which, they were *types* of the *Messiah*, who in the fulness of time was to become incarnate, to be *anointed*, *sanctified*, and *sent* into the world, to act in all things according to his Father's commandment, as his Father's delegate, and as such to be exalted to *sit on his throne in Heaven*, at the head of the creation, to govern the church and the world. And these *types* were named *gods*, and called *the children of the Most High*; as the great antitype was the *Son of God* and *one with his Father*. They were *shadows*; he is the *substance*. They were called *gods*, he is really *God*. So that this is the force of our Saviour's argument; "What the types were in name and shadow, that the antitype must be in reality and substance; for the *Scriptures cannot be broken*. But these types were *gods* in name and shadow. Therefore the Messiah, who is the antitype, must be *God* in reality and substance." Thus in the Jewish sacrifices there was a *shadow* of *substitution*, and they were called *atonements*; so in Jesus Christ there was a *real substitution*, and a *real atonement*. (See my sermon on *Gal.* iii. 24.) And indeed, the Messiah must be in *reality* all that which the types were in *name* and *show*, otherwise the Scripture would not be accomplished and verified.

If any therefore should say, "that as the Jewish kings were gods by office, so Christ was only a God by office; as they only had the shadow of divinity, so He only has the shadow of divinity:" I answer, Then *the Scripture is broken*; the types are not accomplished in the antitype. It is all a *shadow* still. The *substance* is not come. And the *prophetic prayer* with which the 82d Psalm concludes, is never to be answered: "Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations." For it is not a GOD, but a *mere creature*, that is to have "the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession." *Ps.* ii. 8. And if his divinity is but a *shadow*, so is his atonement. The true atonement is not come. The types are not fulfilled. *The Scripture is broken*, and we are yet in our sins. For the blood of one mere creature can no more make a real atonement than the blood of another mere creature. The blood of a *bull* or a *goat*, and the blood of a *mere man*, are equally at an infinite remove from any virtue to make a proper atonement for sin. All that has been done is a *mere shadow*. There is no *substance* in it. And so *the scripture is broken*: and the truth of divine revelation, in general overthrown. For if any one thing held forth in a type or a prophecy should fail of accomplishment, the truth of that whole revelation in which that type or prophecy is contained, would be overthrown. So that granting the Old Testament to be divinely inspired, our Saviour's argument amounts to a strict demonstration.

works wrought by me; which evidently are not the works of a mere man. And they are a sufficient proof that the Father is in me, and I in him, i. e. that *I and my Father are one.*" (*John* x. 34—38.) So spake the incarnate God, who of old dwelt in their tabernacle, from whence *the word of God* used *to come* forth to their chief rulers, when they came to *inquire of the Lord.* Then he was their GOD, and KING, and ORACLE. Now all his glory is laid aside. He is of no reputation. Nor can any thing he says, nor all the mighty works he had wrought, assuage their anger, or keep their hands from violence. He is obliged to leave the temple where he was, and be gone. However, the matter did not end here. For when they arraigned him before the High-Priest, they renew the charge of blasphemy, and pronounce him worthy of death. (*Mat.* xxvi. 63—66.) Nor did *Pilate* know how to express the crime, for which he was put to death, better than in this title put on the cross, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. So that his claiming to be the SON OF GOD and KING OF THE JEWS, cost him his LIFE.

And shall we crucify him afresh, and put him to open shame, and justify all the conduct of the Jews towards him, by saying, he was indeed but a man! For if so, it was blasphemy indeed to pretend to be supreme God. And we know the blasphemer deserved to die, according to the law of *Moses.*

The sense the *Arians* give to the words, is this. "I and my Father are one, i. e. engaged in the same design. And when the Jews through mistake thought he meant, that he was *one with God*; he answers, *I do not mean, I am God by nature, but only God by office.*" Query 1. What was this answer to the purpose? 2. Why did not he expressly tell them, that he only meant he was engaged in the same design with his Father, as all other good men are? This would have cleared him from the odious character of a blasphemer, and prevented their taking up stones again to stone him And if indeed he was but a man, all must own, it was his duty to have spoken out in as plain a manner as *Paul* and *Barnabas* did, when the people of *Lystra* took them for gods, and were about to offer sacrifice to them. (*Acts* xiv. 15.) But to suffer himself to pass for a blasphemer now, and soon after to be pronounced worthy of death for blasphemy; and yet never clear up the matter; but leave his disciples after him, to follow his example, and call him "God the true God, God blessed for ever, by whom and for whom all things were created," when he was as really a mere creature as you and I, is what can never be accounted for.

And what is there to tempt us to this impious and ungrateful deed? Not any thing our blessed Saviour ever said, or ever did: for he always spake and acted in character. As GOD, when in the form of God; as MAN, when in the likeness of men; as a *servant*, when in the form of a servant; as our exalted *Mediator*, now at the right hand of the *Father*; from whom he, as Mediator, has received all his power: and to whom, when he has finished his work, he will, as Mediator, resign his delegated authority. Nor can any thing he ever said, or any thing he ever did, fairly construed, once tempt us to doubt his being by nature supreme God, after such clear evidences of his divinity have been given us. Nor can I think what should induce us to doubt his divinity, unless we secretly imagine, there was no need that the Creator of the universe should become incarnate and die on the cross for us. We were not so bad, nor was sin so great an evil, as to make such an atonement needful. And if this be at the bottom, let us honestly say so, that the world may know the true ground of our infidelity, and see it all summed up in a few words, "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

This was the very case with the unbelieving Jews, and the chief reason of their rejecting christianity. They had an high opinion of their own goodness; nor could they conceive why they might not be accepted with God on the foot of their own righteousness. And therefore the gospel-way of salvation, through the mediation and death of the Son of God, appeared needless in their view, and was therefore absolutely incredible in their sight. This they *stumbled at*, as the great *stumbling-stone*, as St. *Paul* tells us, who was intimately acquainted with the whole affair. (*Rom.* ix. 30—33.) It did bear too hard upon their moral character, as it supposed them so infinitely odious and hell-deserving in the sight of God, that nothing short of the interposition of his own Son, as an expiatory sacrifice, could open a door for him, in justice and honour, to pardon and save them. But how exceeding unreasonable was this their conduct, as their own law so plainly held forth the infinite evil of sin, in threatening eternal damnation for the least transgression? (*Gal.* iii. 10.) Which might easily have led them to a sense of their need of an atonement, of

infinite value, had their hearts honestly laid open to conviction.

And is it not worthy our observation, that those among professed christians, who have denied the divinity of Christ, have been wont generally also to deny our natural depravity, the infinite evil of sin, the eternity of hell-torments, the necessity of any proper satisfaction for sin; the doctrine of justification by faith alone? And perhaps, to be a little more consistent with themselves, they ought to deny the inspiration of the *Old* and *New Testaments*, in which the divinity of Christ, and these other doctrines, are set in so strong a light. And indeed *deism* has been for some time growing to be the most fashionable scheme among the polite and genteel part of the nation. And loose principles and loose practices are preparing us apace for all those heavy judgments which seem to be coming on our nation and land*. (*Judg.* ii. 11—15. *Jer.* xviii. 9, 10.)

3. If Jesus Christ be in very deed the God that created the universe, we may be assured, he is in every respect fit and sufficient for the whole work he undertook; nor will he, nor can he fail to accomplish the whole design he had in view. He was originally unobliged to do a creature's duty, being by nature God; and so at liberty to undertake, and had wherewithal to pay our debt, infinite as it was: whereas, the whole creation had not a farthing to spare for us, owing all they had done, or could do, to God, on their own account. It was honourable to God, to appoint such a surety for us; he was one God might honourably trust and deal with, as he was equal with God, and FELLOW to the *Lord of Hosts*. (*Zech.* xiii. 7. He was worthy the regard of the infinite majesty, able to secure the honour of his law, establish his authority, and answer all the ends of government. He was fit to be admitted, as Mediator, into his presence-chamber; to be exalted to sit at his right hand, a very unmeet place for a mere creature; and to be worshipped by all the heavenly hosts, in his Father's pre-

* Salmon, speaking of the present state of religion in England, says—"Vice and profaneness reign triumphant; the sacred truths of Christianity are questioned and disputed; and a man that is not an infidel, is scarce allowed to have common sense, among those that look upon themselves to be the polite world. SALMON'S *Geog. & Hist. Gram.* pag. 245.

sence; the very thought of which, I am persuaded, no mere creature in that world could possibly endure, but rather with the *angel*, in *Rev.* xxii. 9. would say, *see thou do it not*; for I am but a mere creature; *worship God.* (*Luke* iv. 18.) And fit to sit at the head of the universe, to be made head over all things, to govern the world and the church; a place too high for a mere creature, a trust too great to be reposed in one by nature mutable, fallible, short-sighted; and meet only for immutability, infallibility, and omniscience. And fit finally to judge the world, and as the great arbitrator between God and his rebellious creatures, to see right done, and cause justice to take place: an honour too great for a mere creature, and a work too difficult for any but the omniscient, who "only knows the hearts of all the children of men." But IMMANUEL is fit for all this, worthy the honour, and qualified for the work; and may be thus employed, thus exalted, thus worshipped; not inconsistent with, but *to the glory* of God the Father. Nor can we doubt but that he is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him, nor fear but that he will accomplish all his designs of grace. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, &c. that saith unto Zion, THY GOD REIGNETH!" *Isai.* lii. 7. applied to Christ. *Rom.* x. 15.

4. But if indeed he was the God that created the universe; Oh, how awful and solemn the thought! If indeed he was the GOD that created the universe, who hung incarnate on the cross, "set forth to be a propitiation for sin, that God might be just!" What shall we say! What shall we think!

Let us look up, and behold him, surrounded by thousands of spectators, insulting; "If he be the KING OF ISRAEL,' (indeed he was, but they knew it not; for had they known it they would not have crucified the LORD OF GLORY,) If he "be the KING OF ISRAEL, they say, let him come down from the cross, and we will believe him." They insult; He prays, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." And with all his divinity concealed, as one forsaken of heaven, and cast out from the earth, there he hangs, and bleeds, and dies!

For as our rebellion, with all its circumstances, had been public as it were in the presence of the whole intelligent sys-

tem; so now the satisfaction must be as publicly made. Satan, God's enemy, and our inveterate foe, had seduced our first parents, and in them virtually the whole human race, to transgress the divine law, and cast off the divine authority, and join with him. And here on earth satan had set up his kingdom, in the sight of heaven, and in defiance of the MOST HIGH. And exulting in all his mischief, he was ready impiously to say, "In spite of God, and his Son, the day is my own. For if God pardons an apostate world, doomed to death, then will it appear, that he has no regard to his law, or to his threatening, or to impartial justice; which, when I was driven out of heaven, he pretended, was the motive. Nor can it fail to be matter of eternal triumph to us, to see the honour of his law, and government, and authority given up, to save his creature, man. Or if he resigns the whole human race to destruction, as he certainly will, if he deals by them as he did by us, it will be matter of eternal consolation and joy, to see we can ruin worlds as fast as he can make them. That, let him take what course he will, we are sure of an eternal triumph." So stood the case. And all the inhabitants of heaven looked on, no doubt, to see the event.

"The honour of the divine government," said the ETERNAL SON*, "must and shall be secured. The law is holy,

* I call him, the ETERNAL SON, because he was not only "made of the seed of David, according to the flesh;" but also "declared to be the Son of God, with power, according to the spirit of holiness," i. e. as to his divine nature, "by the resurrection from the dead." *Rom.* i. 3, 4. Agreeable to those words in *Mic.* v. 2. "Thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he COME FORTH," (i. e. be born,) "that is to be ruler in Israel, whose GOINGS FORTH," (the same word in the original, before translated *come forth*,) "have been of old, even FROM EVERLASTING." i. e. As he was the Son of David according to the flesh, in time; so from *eternal ages* he was the Son of God, as to his divine nature. Therefore called, by way of eminence, God's *own Son*, and his *only begotten Son*. *John* iii. 16. *Rom.* viii. 32.

Quest. 1. How then is Christ "the first-born of every creature?" or as it ought rather to be rendered, "the first-born of the whole creation?" *Col.* i. 15. I answer, 1. Not as to his *human nature*; for that was born not two thousand years ago. 2. Nor as to his *divine nature*; for that, instead of being the first-born of every creature, was the Creator of the whole universe. 3. But with respect to *the privileges of the birth-right*, (Psal. lxxxix. 27.) he being appointed "heir of all things," *Heb.* i. 2. In which Isaac was a type of him. See *Gen.*

just and good; and must and shall be magnified and made honourable. Sin is as great an evil as my Father's law speaks it; and must and shall be considered and treated as such; and that in the sight of the whole system. For my Father's authority must and shall be publicly maintained. And yet satan may be disappointed of his expected triumph. For the human race need not be resigned to ruin; for, lo, I am willing to become incarnate, and die in their room. Behold, here I am! *Psal.* xl. 7.

"Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased; thou lovest righteousness and hatest iniquity, and art MY EXPRESS IMAGE;" said the *eternal Father*; "and even as thou hast said, so shall it be. *The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. Gen.* iii. 15. Thy dying love shall defeat the designs of his infernal malice." Wherefore see him now on the cross, "set forth to be a propitiation for sin, to declare the righteousness of God, that God might be just, and yet justify the sinner that believes in Jesus." *Rom.* iii. 25, 26. And there he *spoils principalities and powers*, saps the foundation of satan's kingdom, and even *triumphs over him on the cross. Col.* ii. 15. And all in sight, as it were, of the whole intelligent creation. 1 *Pet.* i. 12. And suited to give universal instruction. *Eph.* iii. 10.

Look up, and stand astonished at this greatest of all God's works. The CREATOR of the universe on the cross! dying as a propitiatory sacrifice for sin! offering up himself to his *Father*, as a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the world! That by faith in his blood we might be justified and saved.

And was there indeed such infinite goodness in the divine nature, that God could find it in his heart to do this thing! a thing, of a nature superior, infinitely superior to the creation of

xxv. 5. All things were created by him and FOR him, originally; and now, as Mediator, he is put into possession of all things, as the great *heir of the whole universe*. And having thus the *birth-right*, he is with propriety called, *the first born of the whole creation*.

Quest. 2. How is Christ the "beginning of the creation of God?" *Rev.* iii. 14. I answer, The word in the original signifies, *the Beginning, the Chief, Principality, Dominion*. And the meaning is, that Christ, as Mediator, is the *Head* and *Ruler* of the universe, and the great CHIEF *of the creation of God*. Eph. i. 21.

thousands and millions of such worlds as this! And was sin indeed such an infinite evil, that nothing could expiate it, but such a sacrifice as this! Sin, which we, stupid mortals, see so little evil in. And did the *eternal Father* value the honour of his law and government more than the life of his *Son!* And if these things were done in the green tree, what will be done in the dry! Where will the unrighteous and ungodly appear when this Jesus comes in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel! How vain will it be to cry for mercy! how vain to hope that impartial justice will relent! The Son of God prayed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;" and even agonized in blood! But it was not possible: justice must be satisfied; the Son of God himself must die: therefore impenitent Christless sinners cannot escape; nor can they ever be released: But "the smoke of their torment will ascend for ever and ever."

That God is in earnest, when he threatens to punish impenitent sinners with eternal damnation, cannot be made more evident than it is by the cross of Christ. However, it may be more attended to, and so work a more universal conviction. Yet their eternal damnation itself, will not be a greater *proof*, that God was in earnest, than the death of his Son on the cross. The whole intelligent system have here the strongest evidence of the impartial rectitude of the divine nature, and of the inflexibility of the divine justice, that can possibly be given. And at the same time, the boundless goodness of the divine nature set in the clearest point of light. Wherefore to conclude, let us here behold the "glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ;" that beholding "in this glass the glory of the Lord," we may be changed into the same image, from glory to glory. That so the Gospel may become the power of God to our salvation. That while Christ crucified is to some a stumbling-block, and to others foolishness, he may be to us the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

Now to him "who loved us and gave himself for us, be glory, honour, and praise for ever and ever." Amen. Even

To HIM, who is "the Alpha and the Omega, the Almighty, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, who is God, the true

ghty God, the holy one of Israel, sitting on a
. ,n and lifted up, God over all blessed for ever, by
.ad for whom all things were created," even to HIM
ery knee bow in heaven and on earth;" and it will be so
from derogating or detracting from the honour, that it
will be "to the glory, of God the Father." For, "he and his Father are ONE." Yea, "there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are ONE." And to this ONE GOD in three persons, to whom we were dedicated in baptism, and from whom all blessings flow to us, even to HIM, be ascribed "the kingdom, power, and glory, for ever." Amen.

THE

MILLENNIUM.

REVELATION xx. 1, 2, 3.

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and satan, and bound him a thousand years. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled.

IN a great variety of respects, the BIBLE is the most remarkable book in the world. In it we have God's moral character clearly exhibited to view, by a history of his conduct, as moral Governor of the world from the beginning: and the nature of fallen man painted to the life by a history of their behaviour for four thousand years. In it we have opened the glorious and astonishing method, that has been entered upon to disappoint all satan's designs, by the interposition of the Son of God; and are informed of his birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and exaltation, and of the glorious designs he has in view. And the whole is so contrived as to be admirably suited to all the circumstances and needs of a good man; that, as it were designed to be the good man's book, in a peculiar sense, so it is perfectly suited to his case. It is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works." (2 *Tim.* iii. 16, 17.)

That sincere concern for the cause of truth and virtue, for the honour of God and interest of true religion, which is peculiar to a good man, whose character it is to love Christ above father and mother, wife and children, houses and lands, yea, better than his own life, must naturally subject him to a

peculiar kind of solicitude. Even as a child of a truly filial spirit, is pained when it goes ill with his father's family, to whose interest he is closely attached; and has a whole system of inward sensations, that a stranger intermeddles not with—the BIBLE, the good man's book, is therefore wisely adapted to ease the good man's pained heart, and afford consolation in this interesting and most important point; as it gives the strongest assurances that the cause of virtue shall finally prevail.

How insupportable must the grief of the pious Jews have been, sitting on the sides of the rivers of Babylon! "There we sat down," say they, "yea, we wept when we remembered Zion." And "on the willows they hung their harps," nor could any thing divert their minds. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth." (*Psal.* cxxxvii.) How insupportable, I say, must their grief have been, while their glorious holy temple, and their holy city, the place of all their sacred solemnities, were laying desolate, and God's people in captivity, had it not been for that promise, so often repeated, that after seventy years God would visit them, and cause them to return to their own land. God knew before-hand the anguish which would be apt to fill their hearts, the sinking discouragements, and all the train of dark and gloomy thoughts, they would be incident to; and before-hand provided a remedy. Yea, no sooner had he denounced their doom in the 39th chapter of *Isaiah*, but immediately in the next chapter, and for ten or twenty chapters together, does he provide for their support. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people; speak comfortably to Jerusalem," &c.

So, how insupportable would have been the grief of the church of Christ, through the long, dark, cruel reign of mystical Babylon, while they beheld error and wickedness universally prevail, satan getting his will in almost every thing, and to appearance no signs of better times, but all things wearing a dreadful aspect before their eyes: how great their grief; how sinking their discouragements; how almost insuperable their temptations to apostatize, and forsake a cause that heaven seemed to forsake, had not the day of deliverance been

expressly foretold, and the glory that should follow opened to view, by the spirit of prophecy! But in a firm belief that the cause they were engaged in, and for which they spilt their blood, would finally prevail, and prevail in this world, where they then beheld satan reigning and triumphing, I say, in a firm belief of this, the whole army of martyrs could march on to battle courageously, willing to sacrifice their lives in the cause, not doubting of final victory, although they themselves must fall in the field.

Indeed, were the salvation of his own soul the only thing the good man had in view, he would naturally be quite easy, upon a full assurance that this was secured. So, had Moses cared for nothing but the welfare of himself, and of his posterity, he might have been satisfied, while the whole congregation of Israel were destroyed, if he might become a great nation, and that without any solicitude for the honour of the GREAT NAME of the GOD of Israel. Yea, although the idolatrous nations round about were fully established in the belief of the divinity of their idols, and brought to look upon the GOD of the Hebrews with ever so great contempt by the means. But, attached as he was to the honour of the God of Israel, nothing could give him satisfaction, but a prospect that that would be secured. The welfare of himself and of his family was of no importance in his esteem, compared with this. (See *Exod.* xxxii.)

It must, therefore, be remembered, that, as the SON of God left his Father's bosom, and the realms of light and glory, and expired on the cross in the utmost visible contempt, that he might spoil principalities and powers, bruise the serpent's head, destroy the works of the devil; so his true disciples have imbibed a measure of the same spirit; and, as volunteers enlisted under his banner, have the same thing in view: they long for the destruction of satan's kingdom; and these petitions are the genuine language of their hearts, "Our father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Nor can the salvation of their own souls, although ever so safely secured, satisfy their minds, without a clear view and fair prospect of Christ's final victory over all his enemies. "But if our great GENE-

RAL, who has sacrificed his life in the cause, may but at last obtain a complete victory, notwithstanding all the present dark appearances; this is enough," says the Christian soldier: "I am willing to risk all in his service, and die in the battle too. But if satan were always to carry the day, Oh who could live under the thought!"

This having been the temper of good men, more or less, even from the early ages of the world, and through all successive generations to this day, they have evidently wanted a peculiar support, which the rest of mankind stood in no need of, to carry them comfortably through such a long scene of darkness; wickedness prevailing, God dishonoured, satan triumphing, the world perishing, the true church of God more generally in sackcloth. And accordingly, the final victory of the cause of truth and virtue was intimated in the very first promise made to fallen man. And from time to time God repeated this comfortable prediction to his church and people; and finally, made it the chief subject of the last book of holy scripture he ordered to be wrote for the use of his church.

Now let us take a brief view of the whole series of these divine predictions, from the beginning of the world, even down to this in our text, contained in one of the last chapters in the bible; that we may see what full evidence there is of this truth; and so what abundant cause for consolation to all the people of God.

I. Immediately after the fall, when the serpent, even that old serpent the devil, had just seduced mankind to revolt from God, and had, to all appearance, laid this whole world in perpetual ruin, even in the depths of this midnight-darkness, a ray of light shone down from heaven. *The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.* (*Gen.* iii. 15.) As if God had said, "I see the scheme that satan has laid to ruin the world, and establish his impious, malicious, cause: I see it, and I am determined to defeat it. The feebler woman he has over-matched, but her almighty seed shall conquer him, and as effectually subdue him, and prevent all future mischief by him, as a serpent is subdued and incapacitated for further mischief, when his head is crushed to pieces under the indig-

nant heel of one determined on his death." This was a complete doom indeed denounced against satan, at the head of the kingdom of darkness. And it fully implied, that the cause of light, truth, and righteousness, should finally obtain a complete victory.

II. After this gracious and glorious promise had been the chief foundation of all the hopes of God's people for two thousand years, God was pleased to point out the particular family from whence this mighty deliverer should spring, and to intimate what a universal blessing he should be to all the nations of the earth. *And in thy* SEED *shall* ALL *the families of the earth be blessed,* said God to Abraham. (*Gen.* xii. 3.) Which again plainly supposed, that the cause of truth and righteousness, notwithstanding the dark state the world then was in, all sinking fast into idolatry, and would for many ages be in, buried in heathenish darkness, should yet in due time universally prevail over the whole earth. For *in thy seed shall* ALL *the families of the earth be blessed.* This same promise was repeated again and again to Abraham, and afterwards to Isaac and to Jacob.

III. Hitherto God had supported his people's hopes chiefly with promises, with verbal predictions; but from the days of Moses to the days of Solomon, king of Israel, to assist his people's faith, God did, besides repeated promises of the same thing, by a great variety of wonderful works, shadow forth the glorious day: and at the same time show, that he had sufficient wisdom and power to accomplish the greatest designs. That his people might be convinced, that he could easily bring to pass, for the good of his church, whatsoever seemed good in his sight.

Israel, in the Egyptian bondage, were a designed type of a fallen world under the dominion and tyranny of satan. Nor was Pharaoh more loath to let Israel go, than satan is to have his subjects desert him, and his kingdom go to ruin. But notwithstanding all the seeming impossibilities in the way of Israel's deliverance, infinite wisdom knew how to accomplish the divine designs. God could even cause a member of Pharaoh's family to educate one to be an instrument of this designed deliverance. And in due time, behold, all the

armies of Israel march forth from the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; and Pharaoh, and his chariots, and all his host, lie buried in the Read sea! So easily can God bring forth his people even out of the anti-christian kingdom, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt. And, if he pleases, raise up the instruments of this glorious work, even in the court of Rome.

And when the name of the true God was almost forgotten through all the earth, and the devil worshipped in his room, in idols of various names, through all the nations, God knew how to make his name known, and to cause his fame to spread abroad, and fill the whole earth with his glory, by wonders wrought in the land of Ham, by descending on Mount Sinai, by leading the armies of Israel forty years in the wilderness, in a pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night, giving them bread from heaven and water out of the flinty rock, dividing Jordan, delivering up one and thirty idolatrous kings to the sword of Joshua, raising up judges one after another in a miraculous manner to deliver his people, until the days of David and Solomon, types of Christ. Of David, who, Messiah-like, subdued the enemies of Israel all around: of Solomon, who built the holy temple, and filled Jerusalem with riches and glory. He, who hath done all these things, can easily accomplish all the designs of his heart, preserve his church, raise up deliverance, break to pieces the kingdoms of the earth for her sake, make truth victorious, and set up the new Jerusalem in all her spiritual glory, build up his Church as a glorious holy temple, and set the son of David upon the throne; by whose hands, satan and all the powers of darkness shall be subdued, chained, sealed up in the bottomless pit, as much afraid, and as much unable to attempt any mischief, as the subdued nations around Israel were in the very height of David's power.

But when shall the son of David reign, and the church have rest? When shall the cause of truth and righteousness thus prevail? Perhaps the very time was designed to be shadowed forth in the law of Moses, in the institution of their holy days. The *seventh day*, said God, who always had this glorious season of rest in view, "the seventh day shall be a

sabbath of rest, the seventh month shall be full of holy days, the seventh year shall be a year of rest:" so, perhaps, after *six thousand* years are spent in labour and sorrow by the church of God, the *seven thousandth* shall be a season of spiritual rest and joy, an holy sabbath to the Lord. And as God the Creator was *six days* in forming a confused chaos into a beautiful world, and rested the *seventh*; so God the Redeemer, after *six thousand* years labour in the work of the new creation, may rest on the *seventh*; and then proclaim a general liberty to an enslaved world, and grant a general pardon to a guilty race; as in the year of *Jubilee*, among the Jews, every enslaved Jew was set at liberty, and the debts of all the indebted were cancelled.

IV These things, thus shadowed forth in types, were also expressly declared by the mouths of the ancient prophets, from the days of David, and forward to the end of that dispensation: and the same things are hinted here and there in the New Testament, and largely opened to view in the revelation of St. John. So that both the Old and New Testaments join to raise in us, who live in these ages, the highest assurance, that it is God's design to "give to his Son the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. (*Psal.* ii. 8.) For all kings shall bow down before him, and all nations shall serve him. (*Psal.* lxxii. 11.) And the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. (*Isai.* ii. 2.) They shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, and learn war no more. (*ver.* 4.) For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. (*Isai.* xi. 9.) A nation shall be born in a day. (*Isai.* lxvi. 8.) All thy people shall be righteous. (*Isai.* lx. 21.) They shall all know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. (*Jer.* xxxi. 24.) And holiness to the Lord shall be written on every thing. (*Zech.* xiv. 20, 21.) Kings shall become nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers, (*Isai.* xlix. 23.) and there shall be nothing to hurt or offend. (*Isai.* xi. 9.) The inhabitants shall not (so much as) say, I am sick. (*Jer.* xxxiii. 24.) And this kingdom shall fill the whole earth. (*Dan.* ii. 35.)

And all nations and languages shall serve him. (*Dan.* vii. 14.) And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high God. (*Dan.* vii. 27.) And the Jews shall be called in, and the fulness of the Gentiles. (*Rom.* xi. 12—32.) For the gospel shall be preached to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. (*Rev.* xiv. 6.) And satan shall be bound, and Christ shall reign on earth a thousand years*." And as surely as the Jews were delivered out of the Babylonish captivity, and Babylon itself destroyed; even so surely shall all these things be accomplished in their time. And mystical Babylon shall "sink as a mill-stone into the sea, and shall be found no more at all." (*Rev.* xviii. 21.)

V. But when shall these things be? I answer, in the first place, it is plain, as yet they have not been, these great things have not been accomplished. They were not accomplished when the Jews were brought out of their Babylonish captivity; for, from thence to the coming of Christ, they never were in so flourishing a state as they had been before. They were not accomplished in the apostolic age: for St. John, when most, if not all, of the other Apostles were dead, spake of these things (in the *Revelation*) as yet to come to pass. They were not accomplished in the three first centuries; for, that was almost one continued scene of blood. They were not accomplished in the days of Constantine the great; for, it is

* *Satan shall be bound*, &c. "The Church of Christ shall enjoy purity of religion in peace, without any disturbance from those old enemies of mankind, working in the children of disobedience." *Daubuz* on the place.

"And this seems to imply, that all shall be converted. However, if there be any that remain unconverted, they will, during the imprisonment of satan, be in so small a number, and so feeble in comparison of the true Christians, that they shall neither dare, nor be able, to disturb the peace of Christ's kingdom." *Lowman* on the place.

A spirit of strict piety shall rise so high, and so universally prevail, that it shall be as though all the martyrs of former ages were risen from the dead, and appeared upon the stage all at once. This seems to be the sense of these words in *Rev.* xx. 4. The martyrs are said to rise from the dead, and reign with Christ a thousand years, much in the same sense as John the Baptist is called Elias, viz. because he was a man so nearly resembling that celebrated prophet. *See Lowman* on the place.

since then that *the man of sin has been revealed.* Nor are they accomplished to this day: for satan is still walking to and fro through the earth, and going up and down therein; Babylon is not fallen; the Jews are not called; nor is the fulness of the Gentiles come in; but the greatest part of the earth to this day sit in heathenish darkness.

When then shall they be accomplished? Not till "the holy city has been trodden under foot forty-two months." Not till "the witnesses have prophesied a thousand, two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth." (*Rev.* xi. 2, 3.) And not till "the woman has been in the wilderness a time and times and half a time." (*Rev.* xii. 14.) Now a time and times and half a time, i. e. three years and a half, is equal to forty-two months; which is equal to one thousand two hundred and sixty days; which doubtless means 1260 years, a day for a year. As the event has proved was the case in the prophecy of Daniel, who declared it to be 70 weeks, from the going forth of the commandment to build Jerusalem, to the death of Christ. For it proved to be 490 years, which is 7 times 70, a day for a year. (*Dan.* ix. 24.)

So that there is no difficulty in determining the downfall of Antichrist, but what arises from the uncertainty we are at when to date the beginning of his rise and reign. The bishops of Rome were some hundred years rising gradually from the honest character of a scripture-bishop to the grand title of *universal Pope*, which was obtained, *A. D.* 606. And it was a long time from this, before they got to the height of their grandeur, and the Pope was constituted a *temporal Prince*, which was not till *A. D.* 756*. And perhaps he may fall as gradually as he rose. And as now he has been falling 240 years, even ever since the beginning of the *reformation*; so we may rationally expect he will continue to fall, till *Babylon* sinks *as a mill-stone into the sea.* And then "the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." (*Isai.* lv. 12.) And all the hosts of heaven as loud as thunder, shall say, "Hallelujah! For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the

* See BOWERS' History of the POPES.

Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." (*Rev.* xix. 6, 7.)

And thus we have taken a brief view of the scripture-evidence, that the cause of truth and righteousness will finally become gloriously victorious.

VI. Nor is there the least reason to doubt the accomplishment of these things. For God *in* all times past has been faithful to his word, and is evidently sufficiently engaged *in* this affair; knows how, and can easily accomplish it; and *it* will be much to the honour of his great name to do it.

God has been faithful to his promises to his church from the beginning of the world. To all human appearance, it was a very unlikely thing, that the Hebrews, enslaved in Egypt, under Pharaoh, a very powerful monarch, and sunk down into idolatry, and very low-spirited, should arise, and go forth with all their flocks and herds, and march through the wilderness, and conquer the seven nations of Canaan, and possess their land. And so it was to all human appearance equally unlikely, that the Jews in Babylon should ever return to their own land. But God had promised in both cases, and God performed. And an event more surprising than either of these, yea, the most astonishing that could have happened, has also come to pass, just as God had said. The promised SEED has been born, and the serpent has *bruised his heel;* and methinks now not only God's faithfulness, but even the nature of the case itself, should lead us to believe, that *the* SEED *shall bruise his head.*

For, after God has appeared to be so *infinitely engaged* to destroy the works of the devil, as to give his only begotten Son, it can surely never once be imagined, that he wants sufficient resolution to carry him through what yet remains to be done.

And he, who could send Pharaoh's daughter to take up Moses, when an infant, out of his basket of bulrushes, and educate him in Pharaoh's court, that he might be skilled in all the arts of government; and when he had spent forty years in this situation, banish him into the land of Midian, that in the solitary life of a shepherd for another forty years, *he* might attain to be the meekest man on earth; that he

might, by both, be thoroughly qualified for the work designed him. And he, who could take David from feeding his father's sheep, and, after a course of trials, so exceeding necessary to prepare frail man for high honours and great usefulness, exalt him to the throne of Israel, so thoroughly furnished to head their armies and subdue their foes, advance their external grandeur, and put great honour upon their religion. And he, who could take Daniel, one of the Jewish captives in Babylon, and raise him to such high honour and great authority, to be a father to his people through their seventy years' captivity, and by his means (perhaps) influence Cyrus so generously to release them, and assist them in their return*. And finally, he who could take a number of poor illiterate fishermen, and the persecuting Saul, and by them lay the foundation of the Christian Church, in spite of the united opposition of earth and hell; and after their death cause the Christian Church to live through, yea, at last to triumph over, the ten bloody persecutions, and even conquer the Roman Empire; and that which is still more wonderful, to subsist to this day, notwithstanding all the subtle and cruel methods, which have for so many hundred years been taken by antichrist to extirpate Christianity out of the world. I say, he who could do these things, cannot be at a loss for means, or want power, to effect the glorious things foretold, which yet remain to be accomplished.

And what if mankind are ever so estranged from God? And what if they are ever so averse to a reconciliation? And what if satan reigns in the courts of princes, in the councils

* As Daniel understood the prophecies of Jeremiah, which had determined the time of the captivity to be seventy years, (*Dan.* ix. 2.) and had his heart so much in the affair of their return, as to *set his face to seek the Lord by fasting and prayer*; (*ver.* 3.) and being the chief man in the kingdom, must have free access to Cyrus; (*Dan.* vi.) so nothing could be more natural than to show him an ancient Jewish prophecy, wherein he was mentioned by name, near two hundred years ago, and pointed out as the person who was to let go the Jewish captives, build Jerusalem, and lay the foundation of the temple. *Isai.* xliv. 28. xlv. 1—3. To which Cyrus no doubt refers in his proclamation. *Ezra* i. 2, 3, 4. "Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he hath CHARGED me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you," &c.

of the clergy, as well as in the cottages of the poor? And what if even the whole world in a manner lies in wickedness? So that a general conflagration might rather be expected, as it is so eminently deserved; are these things any bar in the way?

What if mankind have abused divine grace from the beginning of the world? What if they have murdered his prophets, his Son, and his apostles? What if they have resisted and grieved the Holy Spirit, and perverted the doctrines, and gone counter to the precepts of his holy word? Yea, what if it appears that mankind are really on satan's side? And this after all the kind methods God has taken to reclaim a guilty world? so that even the best man on earth, or the kindest angel in heaven, might be discouraged, totally and finally discouraged, and think it never worth while to take any more pains with such a perverse race, but that it were more suitable to the rules of good government to resign them to destruction? Are any, or all these things together, a sufficient bar to the accomplishment of God's designs, whose goodness is absolutely infinite?

What! After the Son of God has been offered as a sacrifice of atonement, to secure the honour of the divine government, and open a way for the honourable exercise of his grace! What, after the Messiah has been exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins! And after all power and authority in heaven and earth is given into his hands, on purpose to destroy the kingdom of satan, and bring every nation, kindred, and tongue, to bow the knee to God? yea, when the infinitely wise Governor of the world has before determined to permit the wickedness of mankind to come out and stand in so glaring a light, and to suffer satan so long to practise and prosper; to this very purpose, that his power, wisdom, and grace might be the more effectually and the more gloriously displayed, in the accomplishment of all his glorious designs!

Instead of being discouraged, from a view of the past or the present state of the world, as without the light of divine revelation we should naturally have been; methinks now, viewing all things in the light of holy scripture, it must be

perfectly rational to conclude, that all these things are only preparatory, as an introduction to the glorious day; even a all the cruel bondage of Israel in Egypt, and all the haugh conduct of Pharaoh, were but preparatory, as an introducti to the glorious event that God had then in his eye. A what unspeakable honour will redound to God most hig if after all the vile conduct of this apostate world, and notwi standing all their ill-desert, and after all the subtle meth satan has taken to make his kingdom strong; I say, what speakable honour will redound to God most high, if after this he should accomplish his glorious designs? And wh things have been ripening these five or six thousand years, and are now so nearly every way prepared for God to get himself a great name in the total destruction of satan's kingdom, can we once imagine that God will let the opportunity slip? Or rather, ought we not firmly to believe, that when every thing is quite ripe, then God will arise, make bare his arm, and fill the whole world with his glory?

Especially, considering, that as things stand, the honour of all his glorious perfections lies at stake. For ever since the ALMIGHTY gave out the word, that *the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head*, even from that very day, that old serpent, with all his subtilty, has employed his whole power to defeat the divine designs, maintain his kingdom in the world, and escape the dreadful blow. He stirred up Cain to kill his brother, and never left till the whole earth was filled with violence, which brought on the general deluge. And after the flood he was industrious to divert mankind from the knowledge and worship of the true God, and to establish idolatry and the worship of devils in all the kingdoms of the earth. And since christianity appeared, he has turned himself into every shape to defeat the gracious designs of the gospel, and has prevailed and reigned above a thousand years, at the head of the grand antichristian apostacy. And should the Almighty suffer him to go on and prosper, and finally prevail, what would become of his own great name? And how great would be their triumph in the infernal regions, to think, that in spite of God and of his Son, from the beginning to the end of the world, they have held out in a constant war, kept

the field, and at last come off victorious? Wherefore, as when God repeats the wonderful works, which he had done for Israel in the days of old, in the 20th chapter of *Ezekiel*, he constantly says, *I wrought for mine own great name*, so here, in this case, will he do it again, and that in the most eminent manner. As it is written, *the* ZEAL *of the Lord of Hosts will perform this. Isai.* ix. 7.

So that, in a word, if almighty power and infinite wisdom, at the head of the universe, infinitely engaged, are a sufficient match for the guilty, impotent powers of darkness, then we may depend upon it, satan will meet with an overthrow, as notable as did Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea. And as proud Babylon, once the mistress of kingdoms, is now no more; so mystical Babylon shall sink as a millstone in the sea, and rise no more for ever. And,

VII. Whatever mistakes the Jewish rabbies might fall into, in their interpretation of Daniel's 70 weeks, and in their attempts to fix the precise time of the Messiah's coming; and whatever mistaken notions any of them had about the nature of his kingdom, as though it was to be of this world, and he to appear in all earthly grandeur; and although his coming, to some, might seem to be so long delayed that they began to give up all hopes of it, and to contrive some other meaning to all the ancient prophecies, or even to call in question the inspiration of the prophets; yet neither the mistakes of some, nor the infidelity of others, at all altered the case. Days, and months, and years, hastened along, and one revolution among the kingdoms of the earth followed upon another, till *the fullness of time* was come, till all things were ripe; and then, behold, the MESSIAH was born. Even so it shall be now.

Whatever mistakes christian divines may fall into, in their interpretation of 666, the number of the beast, or in their endeavours to fix the precise time when the 1260 years of Antichrist's reign shall begin and end; or whatever wrong notions some have had, or may have about the nature of the Millennium, as though Christ was to reign personally on earth; and if some, meanwhile, begin to think, that all things will go on as they have done, and to conclude, that the expectation of these glorious days, which has prevailed in the christian

church from the beginning, is merely a groundless fancy; yet none of these things will at all alter the case. Days, and months, and years, will hasten along, and one revolution among the kingdoms of the earth follow upon another, until the fullness of time is come, till all things are ripe for the event; and then the ministers of Christ will accomplish, in reality, what St. John saw in his vision. *I saw an angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred, and tongue, and people.* (*Rev.* xiv. 6.) And then shall it come to pass, that *the vail* of ignorance, which hath so long spread over all nations, *shall be destroyed,* (*Isai.* xxv. 7.) and knowledge shall so greatly increase, that it shall be as though the *light of the moon* were *as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun seven fold,* (*Isai.* xxx. 26.) until *the knowledge of the Lord cover the earth, as the waters do the sea.* (*Isai.* xi. 9.) And then there *shall be nothing to hurt or offend in all God's holy mountain.* For Babylon shall fall, satan be bound, and Christ will reign, and truth and righteousness universally prevail, a thousand years.

REMARKS and INFERENCES.

1. When, therefore, our Saviour, in the days of his flesh, denominated his followers *a little flock,* from the smallness of their number, he had no design to teach us, that this would always be the case, for although it was very true, that his flock was at that time *a little flock;* yet the day was coming, when that *little leaven* should *leaven the whole lump,* (*Mat.* xiii. 33.) and *the stone cut out without hands* should become *a great mountain, and fill the whole earth;* (*Dan.* ii. 25.) so although it was a saying very applicable, not only to our Saviour's day, but to most other periods of the Church, that *many are called and few are chosen;* yet it does not hence follow, that this will be the case when *a nation shall be born in a day,* and *all the people shall be righteous.* And although it has commonly been so, that of the *many* who haves ought *to enter in at the strait gate,* but *few have been able,* and the *generality* have from age to age gone *in the broad way, which leads down*

to destruction: yet it shall be quite otherwise, when *satan is bound, that he may deceive the nations no more*; and when *all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest*, when *the kingdom and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heavens shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High*. For it is very plain, that these and such like expressions used by our Saviour, which were applicable to the then times, and to most other periods, when the number of true converts hath been comparatively very small, were never designed to be applicable to that glorious period yet to come, which is to be the grand harvest-time, when *the Jews*, (who are to this day for that very purpose, no doubt, by divine Providence preserved a distinct people,) and *the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in*. Nor can it be right to interpret such expressions in such a sense, as to render them inconsistent with what the scriptures so plainly teach shall be the case in the latter days. Therefore,

2. Notwithstanding hitherto but few have been saved, there is no evidence but that yet the greater part of mankind may be saved. Nothing can be argued against this from such expressions as have been just mentioned, for the reason already suggested. Nor can any thing be argued from any other passages of Scripture; for the Scripture no where teaches, that the greatest part of the whole human race will finally perish. I am sensible, many seem to take this for granted, and they are greatly strengthened in this belief, from a view of the awful state mankind have been in from the beginning of the world to this day. But if we should even grant, that hitherto not one in ten thousand have been saved, yet it may come to pass, (there may be time enough for it, and men enough yet born,) I say, it may yet come to pass, that by far the greatest part of mankind may be saved.

For, as the Scriptures constantly teach, that in these glorious days universal peace shall prevail; and instead of war, the nations shall employ their time in useful labour, *shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks*; so it will naturally come to pass, that mankind, who are now in vast multitudes destroyed in the wars from one generation to another, will be greatly increased in num-

bers, and plentifully provided for. Only remove wars, famines, and all those desolating judgments, which the sins of mankind have from age to age brought down on a guilty world, and let that universal peace and prosperity take place, which indeed will naturally result from the sincere practice of pure christianity, and mankind will naturally increase, and spread, and fill all the earth. And while every one improves his time well, and is diligent in his calling, according to the rules of our holy religion, and all luxury, intemperance, and extravagance are banished from the nations of the earth, it is certain that this globe will be able to sustain with food and raiment, a number of inhabitants immensely greater than ever yet dwelt on it at a time. And now if *all* these shall *know the Lord from the least to the greatest*, as the scripture asserts, so that *the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters cover the sea*, for a thousand years together, it may easily, yea, it will naturally come to pass, that there will be more saved in these thousand years, than ever before dwelt upon the face of the earth from the foundation of the world.

Some indeed understand the thousand years in the *revelation* agreeable to other prophetical numbers in that book, a day for a year. So *the time, and times, and half a time*, i. e. three years and an half, and the *forty two months*, and the 1260 *days*, are no doubt to be reckoned. And if the dark period is to be reckoned by this rule, it should seem that the light period should likewise. For otherwise the dark period which in that book is represented to be the shortest, will indeed be the longest; the 1260 days longer than the 1000 years; and if the 1000 years is reckoned a day for a year, as the scripture-year contains 360 days, so the 1000 years will amount to 360,000 years. In which, there might be millions saved, to one that has been lost. But not to insist upon this, if this glorious period is to last only a thousand years literally, there may be many more saved than lost.

If it be granted that it is difficult to compute with any exactness in such a case as this, yet it is easy to make such a computation as may satisfy us in the point before us. For in Egypt the Hebrews doubled at the rate of about once in 14 years; in *New-England* the inhabitants double in less than

25 years; it will be moderate, therefore, to suppose mankind, in the Millenium, when all the earth is full of peace and prosperity, will double every 50 years. But at this rate, there will be time enough in a thousand years to double twenty times; which would produce such a multitude of people, as that although we should suppose all who live before the Millennium begins, to be lost; yet if all these should be saved, there would be above seventeen thousand saved, to one that would be lost. As may appear from the table below.

1	- - -	2
2	- - -	4
3	- - -	8
4	- - -	16
5	- - -	32
6	- - -	64
7	- - -	128
8	- - -	256
9	- - -	512
10	- -	1024
11	- -	2048
12	- -	4096
13	- -	8192
14	- -	16384
15	- -	32768
16	- -	65536
17	- -	131072
18	- -	262144
19	- -	524288
20	- -	1048576
Sum total,		2,097,150

In the first column we have the 20 periods, which 1000 years will make, at 50 years to a period. In the second column, we see in what proportion mankind will increase, if they are supposed to double in every 50 years. At the end of the first 50 years, there will two for one. And so on: At the end of the twentieth period, there will be above a million for one. Now suppose the world to stand 6000 years before the Millennium; and suppose it in every age to be as full of inhabitants as it will be when the Millennium begins; and suppose, through all the 6000 years, all the inhabitants of the earth to have died off, and new ones come in their room, at the rate of once in 50 years; 6000 years, at 50 years to a period, will be 120 periods: 120 worlds full; all lost, suppose; yet by the table we see, that the seventh period alone, (which is 128,) would more than counterbalance the whole:

Suppose all before the Millennium lost, = 120
Suppose all in the Millennium saved, = 2097150
Then, 120 : 2097150 :: 1 : 17476 $\frac{30}{120}$ Q. E. D.

That is, above 17000 would be saved, to one lost; which was the point to be proved. Therefore nothing hinders, but that the greatest part of mankind may yet be saved, if God so pleases. There is time enough for it, and may be men enough yet born. And if these calculations may serve to clear up this, they answer the end proposed. What proportion of mankind will finally be saved, and what lost, none can tell. It is no where revealed. God was not obliged to save one out of all this guilty, lost world. Hitherto the generality may have perished: and

3. The periods past, that have been so dark, ought to be considered as introductory to this bright and glorious scene, and in various respects as preparatory thereto.

An apostate race, who had joined with the fallen angels in a course of rebellion against the Governor of the universe, might justly have been forsaken of God, and given up to a state of perfect darkness and wo, from generation to generation, entirely under the power of the prince of darkness. What has happened, in dark ages past, may help us a little to realize what might justly always have been the woful state of a fallen world. We have had a specimen of the dreadful nature and tendency of satan's government, in all the idolatry, wickedness, and wo, which have filled the world. And we have seen a little what is in the heart of fallen man, who have slain the Lord's prophets, crucified his Son, and shed the blood of thousands, yea, of millions of his servants. And what has happened may help us to realize a little what must have been the state of a fallen world, if grace had never interposed. At the same time it hath appeared, after the best contrived experiments have been sufficiently tried, that it is not in the heart of fallen man to repent, nor can he be brought to it by any external means whatsoever; whereby the absolute necessity of the interposition of supernatural grace hath been set in the most glaring light. And now, if after all, God should effectually interpose, destroy the influence of satan, scatter the darkness which fills the world, recover mankind to God, and cause truth and righteousness at last to prevail; it would appear to be altogether of God, of his own mere self-moving goodness and sovereign grace. And after so long and sore a bondage, mankind will be the more sensible of the greatness of the deliverance. Nor can it ever be said by a proud and haughty world, "we did not need the influences of divine grace to bring us right;" when all other

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the Lord is righteous. But who can tell to what a degree God may yet glorify his grace? The holy scriptures encourage us to look for things exceeding great and glorious; even for such events as may put a new face on all God's past dispensations. (See the Sermons on *the Wisdom of God in the Permission of Sin.*)

methods had been sufficiently tried, and tried in vain. But God may justly say, "what could have been done more to reclaim mankind, that I have not done? And to what purpose would it have been, to have taken one step further? I tried them enough. There was no hope. Their heart was a heart of stone. Therefore, behold, I, even I, will take away the heart of stone, and give an heart of flesh; and an apostate world shall be ashamed and confounded, and shall never open their mouth, when I shall do all these things for them."

We are apt to wonder why these glorious days should be so long delayed, if God indeed intends such mercy to men. But God, infinitely wise, knows what is best; knows how to conduct the affairs of the universe; knows when is the fittest time to introduce this glorious state of things; knows when matters will be all ripened, and every thing in the moral world prepared; so that this glorious day may be ushered in to the best advantage, in a manner most suited to honour God and his Son, to humble a haughty world, and to disappoint satan most grievously, after all his wily schemes, great success, and high expectations: I say, God knows when this will be. And this is the very time he has fixed upon for this glorious work.

4. It therefore becomes all the followers of Christ, in their several spheres, under a firm belief of these things, to be of good courage, and exert themselves to the utmost, in the use of all proper means, to suppress error and vice of every kind, and promote the cause of truth and righteousness in the world; and so be workers together with God.

If one stood at the head of this glorious army, which has been in the wars above these five thousand years, and has lived through many a dreadful campaign, and were allowed to make a speech to these veteran troops upon this glorious theme, he might lift up his voice, and say, "Hail, noble heroes! brave followers of the Lamb! Your general has sacrificed his life in this glorious cause, and spoiled principalities and powers on the cross! and now he lives and reigns. He reigns on high, with all power in heaven and earth in his hands. Your predecessors, the Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs, with undaunted courage, have marched into the field of battle, and

conquered dying! and now reign in heaven! behold, ye are risen up in their room, are engaged in the same cause, and the time of the last general battle draws on, when a glorious victory is to be won. And, although many a valiant soldier may be slain in the field; yet the army shall drive all before them at last. And satan being conquered, and all the powers of darkness driven out of the field, and confined to the bottomless pit, ye shall reign with Christ a thousand years; reign in love and peace, while truth and righteousness ride triumphant through the earth. Wherefore lay aside every weight, and, with your hearts wholly intent on this grand affair, gird up your loins, and with all the spiritual weapons of faith, prayer, meditation, watchfulness, &c. with redoubled zeal and courage, fall on your spiritual enemies. Slay every lust that yet lurks within, as knowing your domestic foes are the most dangerous: and with gentleness, meekness, and wisdom, by your holy conduct, your pious examples, your kind instructions, your friendly admonitions, spread the savour of divine knowledge all around you, as ye are scattered here and there through a benighted world; labouring to win souls to Christ, to induce the deluded followers of satan to desert his camp, and enlist as volunteers under your prince, MESSIAH. And if the powers of darkness should rally all their forces, and a general battle through all the Christian world come on; O, love not your lives to the death! Sacrifice every earthly comfort in the glorious cause! Sing the triumphs of your victorious general in prisons and at the stake! And die courageously, firmly believing the cause of truth and righteousness will finally prevail."

Surely it is infinitely unbecoming the followers of Him who is *King of kings and Lord of lords*, to turn aside to earthly pursuits, or to sink down in unmanly discouragements, or to give way to sloth and effeminacy, when there is so much to be done, and the glorious day is coming on. How should those who handle the pen of the writer, exert themselves to explain and vindicate divine truths, and paint the Christian religion in all its native glories! How should the pulpit be animated, from sabbath to sabbath, with sermons full of knowledge and light, full of spirit and life, full of zeal for God,

and love to men, and tender pity to infatuated sinners! Christ loves to have his ministers faithful, whether the wicked will hear or not. And let pious parents be unwearied in their prayers for, and instructions of their children, and never faint under any discouragements; as knowing, that Christ is exalted to give repentance and remission of sins, and can do it for whom he will. Bring your children and friends, with all their spiritual diseases, and lay them at his feet; as once they did their sick, when this kind Saviour dwelt on earth. Let pious persons of every age, and in every capacity, awake from sleep, and arise from the dead, and live and act worthy their glorious character and high expectations; and in their several stations exert themselves to the utmost to promote the Redeemer's glorious cause. Let this age do their share, as David, although the temple was not to be built in his day, yet exerted himself to lay up materials for that magnificent edifice, on which his heart was intently set; as knowing, that in his son's day it would be set up in all its glory. So let us rise up, and with the greatest alacrity contribute our utmost towards this building, this living temple, this temple all made of lively stones, of stones alive, in which God is to dwell, and which will infinitely exceed in glory the temple of Solomon, that was built of dead timber and lifeless stones. And let this be our daily prayer, an answer to which we may be assured of, whatever other requests are denied us, *our Father which art in heaven*, &c. *for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever.* AMEN.

A

SERMON,

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF

THE COLONY OF CONNECTICUT, AT HARTFORD,

ON THE DAY OF THE

ANNIVERSARY ELECTION,

MAY 13, 1762.

PROVERBS xiv. 34.

Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.

SOON after Solomon came to the throne of Israel, the Lord appeared unto him, and said, "ask what I shall give thee?" Solomon, desirous above all earthly things to be qualified for his high station, requests neither riches nor honour, nor length of days, nor the life of his enemies, but rather prays for "an understanding heart." And this prayer "pleased the Lord." God loves to see rulers more concerned about their duty than about their private interest. A benevolent, generous frame of heart prompting them to do all the good in their places that they can, is pleasing to the Lord. Wherefore God heard his prayer, and gave him a wise and understanding heart, as he desired; and long life, riches, and honour, besides. "God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea-shore: and Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the East country, and all the wisdom of Egypt; for he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda,

the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth which had heard of his wisdom: and he spake three thousand proverbs," one of which was this, *righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.* These words, then, come recommended to our most serious consideration, as containing one of the wise maxims of the wisest of men, a chief political principle of the greatest politician; and they furnish us with a subject proper for this occasion. Here, then, let us inquire,

I. What is meant by righteousness.

II. How righteousness exalteth a nation.

III. How sin is a reproach to any people,

And then,

IV. I will endeavour to show, that the only way for us in this colony to be a happy community, is to be a righteous people.

1. In the first place, we are to inquire, what is meant by righteousness? And no doubt the word is designed to comprise all moral virtue in general; as it was only in this large and comprehensive sense of the word, that national prosperity and happiness were promised to righteousness under the Jewish dispensation. But then still it may be inquired, what is the sum of moral virtue? and how does righteousness naturally comprise the whole?

To view beings and things as they are, and to be affected and act accordingly, is the sum of moral virtue. All moral virtue, is frequently in the sacred writings summed up in one thing, under one comprehensive name. For, as every moral virtue grows up from one root, and is therefore radically but one thing; so with the greatest propriety all may be called by one name. Thus LOVE, in fact, is the whole of moral virtue. And thus LOVE is the name given to the whole, in that brief summary of the divine law given by our blessed Saviour, "Thou shalt *love* the Lord thy God with all thy heart:" and "Thou shalt *love* thy neighbour as thyself." Love is radically the whole of that duty which God requires of man. "For on these two commands hang all the law and the prophets." Yea, love is the sum of all God's moral perfections. And of all holiness in all holy beings in the universe. For the mo-

ral law is the transcript of God's moral perfections. The divine nature is the original, the divine law, is an exact transcript, and in a perfect conformity to this law consists the perfect holiness of angels and saints in heaven; and in an imperfect conformity to it, consists the imperfect holiness of saints on earth; and the perfect mediatorial righteousness of Jesus Christ, is but a perfect conformity to the same rule through a course of the severest trials. For the holiness of God and Christ, of angels and saints in heaven, and of saints on earth, is of the same nature, how different soever in degree and in circumstances. For there is but one kind of true holiness in the universe: and all consists in love. *God is love;* and *love* is the sum of all that duty which God requires of man. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." But,

Love to God and to our neighbour supposes that we view them as they are, and it consists in our being affected accordingly, and this affection naturally excites to an answerable conduct. And,

To love God with all our hearts, is only to give him his due: for he deserves it at our hands. And to love our neighbour as ourselves, is only to feel toward them as we would have them feel toward us; that is, to do as we would be done by. And therefore to love God with all our hearts, and our neighbour as ourselves, is in its own nature *right*. He, then, who is thus affected toward God and his neighbour is, in scripture, called a *righteous* man. He is *rightly* affected. He feels as he ought to do. His heart is *right*. And so he is called a *righteous* man. And therefore *righteousness* is another name used in scripture as comprehending the sum of all virtue, even as the word *sin* is used to comprehend all vice. Thus in our text, *righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.*

II. Righteousness exalteth a nation: as it is in itself an honourable thing; as it has a natural tendency to make a nation prosperous and happy; and as it will be attended with the special smiles of him, who loves righteousness and hates iniquity, and sitting at the head of the universe, can build up or pull down nations at his pleasure.

Righteousness is in its own nature an honourable thing. Yea, among all the variety of excellencies in the universe, there is none of equal dignity with this. It renders God glorious, angels lovely, and heaven a place of consummate bliss. Infinite knowledge, almighty power, and universal dominion, render the Deity great; but it is righteousness, or the moral rectitude of his nature, that renders *him* glorious. Could we conceive an almighty being at the head of the universe, able with the utmost ease to accomplish all his purposes, but entirely devoid of moral rectitude, whatever reason there might be to fear and tremble before him, there would be no ground for any one in the intellectual system to esteem, love, and honour him. Perfect moral rectitude is the highest glory of the divine nature itself. Yea, it is radically, the sum total of all that beauty there is in the Deity. It is this that renders every other attribute of God amiable, and causes the divine Being to appear glorious in the eyes of angels, in whatever point of light they view him.

Is he almighty, so that none can resist him? is he all-knowing, so that none can circumvent him? is he supreme, so that none can call him to an account? and is he an absolute sovereign, so as to be entirely at liberty to conduct according to the counsel of his own will? and does his providence extend to all things in the universe? and is this a settled maxim with him, *my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure?* Yet, as he is a being of perfect moral rectitude, he is not the less, but rather infinitely the more glorious, in the eyes of the angelic world. They rejoice in his almightiness and infinite wisdom, they exult in his supremacy and absolute sovereignty, and are ravished in a view of his universal government, because it is absolutely perfect. They cry one to another, *Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.*

It is not with the great monarch of the universe, as it is many times with earthly princes. They often abuse their power and their supremacy to mischievous purposes. The thought, that there is none above them to call them to an account, emboldens them to cruel and barbarous deeds. And this, amidst all *their* external grandeur and glory, sinks their character and

renders them odious and contemptible. All their royal dignity loses its lustre while they are without that moral rectitude, which exalts the great Monarch of the universe above all blessing and praise. For, concerning God, it may be said, that great as his power is, he never used it to oppress the meanest subject in his dominions: and absolute as his sovereignty is, he never made one unwise decree. His law is holy, just, and good, like its author; perfect in beauty, without a blemish; sweeter than honey, yea, than the honey-comb: and all his conduct towards his creatures is so exactly right, and good, and wise, that it is absolutely above emendation. In all instances he knows what is best to decree, and what is best to command, and what is best to do; and in all instances he decrees, he commands, and he conducts, as well as he knows how. An absolutely perfect, an infinitely glorious and amiable Being! It is true, he is accountable to none; and it is equally true, there is no need of it: for he is absolutely perfect. It is true, "he worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will;" and it is equally true, that the counsel of his own will is absolutely perfect. "He doth according to his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?" But then, "He is the rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." It is true, "He is the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, and who dwelleth in that high and holy place," infinitely exalted above the noblest of his creatures; yet at the same time, "he dwells with the humble and contrite, to revive the Spirit of the humble, and the spirit of the contrite ones." It is true, he has the care of kingdoms, and countries, armies and fleets; yea, all the grand affairs of the universe lie upon his hands; for "his kingdom ruleth over all:" however, he is as mindful of the widow and the fatherless children, who trust in him, and takes as good care of all their concerns, as though he had nothing else to do; for "the very hairs of their head are all numbered." But if we begin to speak in his praise, we know not where to stop; for there is no end to the excellencies of his character. And, it is righteousness, it

is the perfect moral rectitude of his nature, that thus exalts him, and renders him worthy of so much honour and praise.

And it is this which renders the angels, the inhabitants of heaven, such glorious beings. They are like their sovereign King; holy, as he is holy. Their hearts are right, they feel as they ought to feel. They view all beings and things, so far as their finite capacities will admit, as they are, and are affected and act accordingly. They view the Deity as the sum of being, of perfection, and of all good; as their Creator, and rightful Lord and Sovereign; and consider one another as fellow-creatures and fellow-subjects: and they feel and act accordingly. And to rejoice in God's exaltation, to exult in his absolute supremacy and universal dominion, to be charmed with the beauties of his character and the perfection of his conduct, to be entirely dependent on him and absolutely devoted to him, perfectly united together in sentiments and in the most cordial love, render them glorious angels and happy associates. Righteousness, or moral rectitude, is their beauty and glory, and what renders them such a noble and blessed community, under the government of Him, who is absolutely perfect in the highest possible degree.

And THIS IS HEAVEN. And thus righteousness exalts that holy community above. God possesses the throne, not merely as being Creator and Lord of all things, but on the foot of proper merit and worthiness. He is worthy on account of his superior character; he is infinitely worthy on account of his infinitely superior character to take the throne, and reign over all for ever and ever: "for his name alone is excellent, and his glory is exalted above the heavens." And the angelic hosts, while they stand before him, full of humility and reverence, of love to him, of harmony among themselves, all ready to do his will, are worthy to be approved, and loved, and honoured by their glorious Sovereign.

From heaven, the world of righteousness, look down to hell, the world of sin and wickedness, of discord and confusion, of pride, malice, envy, and all the furious passions, and view them in contrast; and well consider their different states, and behold, thus righteousness exalteth the one, and thus sin sinks down the other.

And if righteousness is of so honourable a nature, as thus to exalt even God himself, no wonder the wise man should say, *righteousness exalteth a nation:* If it is the very glory of the divinity, if it is the beauty of angels, if it is this chiefly which renders heaven so much better than hell, no wonder Solomon should think it would render kingdoms, countries, and nations on earth honourable and glorious, should it once prevail among them.

Let us stop here, a few minutes, and think what the consequences would be, should righteousness, which is the glory of the deity, and the very beauty of heaven, should that holy and divine temper, which reigns there in perfection, descend on crowned heads, and fill the courts of princes, and spread down through every rank, even down to the meanest cottager, and to the poorest beggar. What would the consequences be? Heaven would soon begin on earth.

Princes, even the most haughty monarchs of the earth, who, to gratify their pride and ambition, do often now, in the present state of things, summon mighty armies spread war, devastation, and ruin, through whole countries, would be at once turned into other men, "be converted, and become as little children," as harmless as doves, as meek as lambs. Such would be their humility, their self-abhorrence, their penitence, their reverence toward the Deity, and love to the human kind, that they would speedily, and with the utmost sincerity, begin to concert measures for a universal, perpetual peace. Ambassadors for that end would be sent from, and to, every monarch, prince, and court; and orders be soon dispatched to fleets and armies to stop the effusion of human blood. The thundering cannons would cease to roar. Peace, universal peace, be soon proclaimed; for every monarch, from the heart, would soon begin to say to each other, "take your right, my brother, and let me have mine, and let us live in love and peace, and seek the true happiness of our subjects, and no longer go on sacrificing thousands of precious lives in quarrels which honest men might settle with the utmost ease." And so now the "nations would beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, neither would they learn war any more."

And should righteousness, should all right affections, should supreme love to God and Jesus Christ, love to our holy religion, brotherly love, meekness, gentleness, fidelity, temperance, chastity, and all the christian graces, not only take possession of the hearts of kings, but spread through all their royal families, among their privy counsellors, through their parliaments, and to all their courts of justice, and should the sacred flame fly from city to city, from town to town, through all their dominions, and into all their distant colonies, into what a glorious and happy state would things be immediately brought! Look round upon all ranks and orders of men, and behold the glorious change!

Go to the clergy, and view them in their studies, or in their pulpits, behold, they are clothed with righteousness, they are inflamed with every holy, pious, benevolent, heavenly affection! they love their master, they love their people, they love their work; they "delight in the law of the Lord, and in his law do they meditate day and night." They are like trees planted by the rivers of water, whose leaf never falls, and which brings forth fruit in their season." And out of their "treasure," from time to time, they "bring forth things new and old." While their public prayers and their sermons are animated with the humblest, purest, warmest devotion. And, O behold, how they love one another! Look through a province, they are united in the same faith, and love and live as brethren. Yea, look through a kingdom, yea, look from kingdom to kingdom, there are no sects, no parties, no divisions. They all, ministers and people, make up one great family, united in faith and love; united in one and the same belief, and in the most cordial affection to one another. And ministers of choice give themselves wholly to their work; and their people from their own inclination unite as one to give them an honourable support, not as their burden, but as their delight, they even take pleasure in it.

Go to the merchant's shop, and you will find not only just weights and just measures, but also piety towards God and love to the human kind, diligence and industry, prudence in their calling, frugality in their expenses, generosity to the poor, charmingly mingled in their characters. And, while

conquered dying! and now reign in heaven! behold, ye are risen up in their room, are engaged in the same cause, and the time of the last general battle draws on, when a glorious victory is to be won. And, although many a valiant soldier may be slain in the field; yet the army shall drive all before them at last. And satan being conquered, and all the powers of darkness driven out of the field, and confined to the bottomless pit, ye shall reign with Christ a thousand years; reign in love and peace, while truth and righteousness ride triumphant through the earth. Wherefore lay aside every weight, and, with your hearts wholly intent on this grand affair, gird up your loins, and with all the spiritual weapons of faith, prayer, meditation, watchfulness, &c. with redoubled zeal and courage, fall on your spiritual enemies. Slay every lust that yet lurks within, as knowing your domestic foes are the most dangerous: and with gentleness, meekness, and wisdom, by your holy conduct, your pious examples, your kind instructions, your friendly admonitions, spread the savour of divine knowledge all around you, as ye are scattered here and there through a benighted world; labouring to win souls to Christ, to induce the deluded followers of satan to desert his camp, and enlist as volunteers under your prince, MESSIAH. And if the powers of darkness should rally all their forces, and a general battle through all the Christian world come on; O, love not your lives to the death! Sacrifice every earthly comfort in the glorious cause! Sing the triumphs of your victorious general in prisons and at the stake! And die courageously, firmly believing the cause of truth and righteousness will finally prevail."

Surely it is infinitely unbecoming the followers of Him who is *King of kings and Lord of lords,* to turn aside to earthly pursuits, or to sink down in unmanly discouragements, or to give way to sloth and effeminacy, when there is so much to be done, and the glorious day is coming on. How should those who handle the pen of the writer, exert themselves to explain and vindicate divine truths, and paint the Christian religion in all its native glories! How should the pulpit be animated, from sabbath to sabbath, with sermons full of knowledge and light, full of spirit and life, full of zeal for God,

ble. All the influence his high station, superior wisdom and goodness, give him over their hearts, is wholly consecrated to make them a still holier and happier people. For he feels toward them all the good-will and tenderness, which are wont to reside in the heart of a nursing father or nursing mother toward an infant child.

Go to the taverns, and even they are houses of piety and good order. No rioting or drunkenness, no chambering or wantonness to be found there. No town-dwellers assembled for drinking and debauchery. No! for there are no such people to be found in towns where righteousness universally prevails. At these houses the stranger and the traveller may call, refresh themselves in quiet, or take lodging in peace, and in the morning go their ways, rejoicing to see good order and religion reign every where.

Go to the cottages of the poor, if you can find them, for their number will be but small in such a state of things. None rendered poor by a course of excessive drinking, or by gay dressing, or by high living, or by idleness, or by any dishonest practices. A few, perhaps, you may find, rendered poor through some natural infirmity of body or mind, or by some adversity which it was not in their power to foresee and prevent. And these are as humble as they are poor. They quietly submit to providence, they are thankful for the little they have, they are industrious and prudent according to their abilities; and instead of envying their neighbours, they rejoice in their prosperity. They are beloved by every one; and their neighbours feel a peculiar pleasure in granting them relief from time to time. So that, in the midst of their poverty, they are really happy, and want none of the necessaries of life, and enjoy many of its conveniences.

Go to the schools of the prophets, to the seminaries of learning, and see a little picture of heaven. The whole society in perfect love and harmony, making swift advances in all knowledge, divine and human, growing up in love to God and to the human kind, and ripening for public service, under the indefatigable labours of their wise and learned instructors, whom they love and honour, as dutiful children do their parents.

Meanwhile peace and plenty, universal love and harmony reign from town to town, through all the province, through all the kingdom, yea, through all the kingdoms of the earth, where righteousness thus prevails. And heaven looks down propitious, and declares, "Blessed shalt thou be in thy basket and in thy store, blessed shalt thou be in the house and in the field."

Nor let any think this a description of a fictitious state of things. Rather let every one know, that all this, and more than all this, shall be accomplished, when once that petition, so often put up by the true followers of Jesus, by his special direction, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done earth as it is in heaven," is answered, and his holy religion comes to take place among mankind, when once "the stone cut out without hands becomes a great mountain, and fills the whole earth." Nor will what is written fail of an accomplishment in its season. For there has already "come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch has grown out of his roots," and he has taken "the throne of his father David," that he may reign over "every nation, language, and tongue," and the kingdom, and the "greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven" is to be given to him. At present, for wise and holy ends, Satan is suffered "to deceive the nations;" but the day draws nigh, when he is to be "bound a thousand years." And then "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox: and the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." And thus *righteousness* tends to *exalt a nation*, and to render all the inhabitants of the earth happy. O, how glorious is the religion of Jesus Christ! When shall the day come, that it shall effectually take place in the hearts of mankind!

word, we live in so good a land, and enjoy such advantages for navigation, that were we virtuous and wise, were we prudent and industrious, we might have enough of all the good things of this world, and be in debt to no other province or people upon the face of the earth.

And as to civil privileges, no community under heaven enjoys greater than we do. Nor is it easy to conceive what greater civil privileges can be enjoyed than we enjoy. Once every year, we may unite as brethren, and choose out our wisest and ablest men, to make our laws, to guide our public affairs, and provide for the decision of all our civil controversies. And all our towns are so many corporations, invested with power to take care of their own public concerns, and suppress idleness and debauchery, and every kind of immorality. And even every little parish has, so far as it needs for its own well being, as part of the whole, full power and authority to manage and order its own affairs. Meanwhile each family is a distinct kingdom of its own, and for the defence of its rights and properties stands entitled to the wisdom and strength of the whole community.

And as to our religious privileges, every man has the Bible in his own hands, and is at liberty to read and think, and judge for himself. Every man, as he is at the day of judgment to stand or fall for himself, so is now at liberty to worship God in that way, which he verily thinks will be at last approved of by his Judge; every parish is an ecclesiastical society, invested with full power to choose their own minister and provide for his support. And every particular church is at liberty to come into what connexions they judge most for their own edification. Were any particular parish and church disposed to be independants, they might be so. Or if they choose to form themselves on the presbyterian plan, they have their liberty. Or, if they desire to declare for the church of England, there is none to hinder them. Or if they choose to be in connexion with neighbouring churches, agreeable to the ecclesiastical constitution of this government, the door is open, and they are welcome to all the privileges of such a connexion, only submitting to the orders, and performing the duties, which are necessarily implied in the very nature of the con-

ral law is the transcript of God's moral perfections. The divine nature is the original, the divine law, is an exact transcript, and in a perfect conformity to this law consists the perfect holiness of angels and saints in heaven; and in an imperfect conformity to it, consists the imperfect holiness of saints on earth; and the perfect mediatorial righteousness of Jesus Christ, is but a perfect conformity to the same rule through a course of the severest trials. For the holiness of God and Christ, of angels and saints in heaven, and of saints on earth, is of the same nature, how different soever in degree and in circumstances. For there is but one kind of true holiness in the universe: and all consists in love. *God is love*; and *love* is the sum of all that duty which God requires of man. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." But,

Love to God and to our neighbour supposes that we view them as they are, and it consists in our being affected accordingly, and this affection naturally excites to an answerable conduct. And,

To love God with all our hearts, is only to give him his due: for he deserves it at our hands. And to love our neighbour as ourselves, is only to feel toward them as we would have them feel toward us; that is, to do as we would be done by. And therefore to love God with all our hearts, and our neighbour as ourselves, is in its own nature *right*. He, then, who is thus affected toward God and his neighbour is, in scripture, called a *righteous* man. He is *rightly* affected. He feels as he ought to do. His heart is *right*. And so he is called a *righteous* man. And therefore *righteousness* is another name used in scripture as comprehending the sum of all virtue, even as the word *sin* is used to comprehend all vice. Thus in our text, *righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.*

II. Righteousness exalteth a nation: as it is in itself an honourable thing; as it has a natural tendency to make a nation prosperous and happy; and as it will be attended with the special smiles of him, who loves righteousness and hates iniquity, and sitting at the head of the universe, can build up or pull down nations at his pleasure.

in other provinces, and we become their tenants, and have nothing to leave to our children but poverty and slavery, what a contemptible appearance shall we make in the eyes of our neighbours. *A wise man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself; but the fool goeth on and is punished.*

And all our civil and religious liberties and privileges, if we divide into sects and parties, and grow angry, and if we abuse our liberties to the purposes of strife and contention, to bite, and devour, and oppress, may cease to administer to our comfort in this world, and only serve to render us so much the more inexcusable and miserable in the world to come. And our college, if not well instructed and governed, instead of being a nursery of learning and piety, may become a seminary of error and wickedness, and serve but to infect all our land. And while our idleness, our extravagances, our parties, our errors, and our wickedness in general, all join to render us a miserable people, they will at the same time naturally prepare us for, and bring down, the judgments of God upon us. And it may come to pass, when our iniquities are full, and we ripe for destruction, that the cup of trembling, which has been put into the hands of *our sister Canada*, may be given us to drink. *Our sister Canada*, I say; for *Canada*, with all her wickedness, is as much *our sister*, as *Sodom* of old was the *sister of Judah*, who were by profession God's peculiar people. And God greatly resented it, that the Jews, in their prosperity, took no notice of the remarkable vengeance, which he had executed on Sodom their sister. And this is brought in, among the rest of their crimes, in the time of their visitation, when they were captives in Babylon, to justify the divine severity towards them. *Ezek.* xvi. 56. *For thy sister Sodom was not mentioned by thy mouth in the day of thy pride.* And yet, proud as they were of their own goodness, God looked on the Jews more wicked than the Sodomites, *ver.* 48. *As I live, saith the Lord God, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters.* For when a people who are lifted up to heaven with privileges, yet go on impenitent in their sins, they are in the eyes of God more guilty than the worst of the heathen. Therefore it was, that our Saviour denounc-

ed such heavy woes against Coraizin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, because they repented not. *It shall be more tolerable,* says he, *for Tyre and Sidon, for Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for you, Mat.* xi. 20. 24. And thus, with all our glorious privileges, if we go on impenitent in our sins, we shall be miserable while we live, and it will be more tolerable in the day of judgment for Canada than for us. But on the other hand,

3. Should God now of his infinite mercy through Jesus Christ, after all our aggravated provocations, give us *eyes to see,* and *ears to hear,* and *hearts to understand;* and should we all, high and low, rich and poor, old and young, be brought each one to *know the plague of his own heart;* and not *cover,* but *confess our sins;* repent and return to God through Jesus Christ, and become christians indeed, how soon should we be *healed!* God would become our friend, and we friends to one another. We should have *one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father,* and we all should become brethren, united together in the most cordial love, and then there would be an end to all our divisions. Meanwhile, pride and a luxurious disposition being mortified, those expensive and extravagant ways of living, to which our pride and luxuriousness now prompt us, would be looked upon with abhorrence, and laid aside with shame and regret, as infinitely unbecoming a people professing godliness. And idleness would begin to appear to us as it did to St. Paul, a scandalous crime. We should look upon an idle christian as *a disorderly walker,* and in obedience to the apostle's command, *withdraw ourselves from such.* 2 *Thes.* iii. 6—14. And *not to provide for our own households,* would be esteemed a practical apostacy from christianity, *a denying of the faith,* and *being worse than infidels.* 1 *Tim.* v. 8. The noise of riot would be no more heard in our land. Taverns would be empty; industry would take place; prudence, frugality, honesty, and all the social virtues. In consequence of which our debts would soon be paid; the farmer, the tradesman, the merchant, get out of their embarrassed circumstances, and all things begin to put on another face. And now we should

possess a disposition to make a right improvement of all our external advantages to be a happy people. And,

If all our external advantages were improved, as a virtuous people might improve them, we might be very happy. If Solomon's character of *a virtuous woman*, (*Prov.* xxxi.) should become the common character of our women; and St. Paul's sentiments of industry should be *practically* espoused by our men; we should soon have a fullness of all things. And if humility and love, love to God and to mankind, if this, which is indeed the true christian temper, should take full possession of all orders and ranks of men, there would soon be an end to all our parties, and to all our contentions. For, *from whence come wars and fightings among you*, says the apostle, *Come they not hence even of your lusts, that war in your members*. If our lusts therefore were mortified, there would be an end to all wars and contentions. And if love to God and to mankind took full possession of our souls, we should of course feel and live as brethren, in the most cordial friendship.

And now,

We should naturally unite in choosing those to rule over us, who are our wisest and ablest men; and they would naturally be affected toward the community as a father toward his children; and we should love and reverence them as our fathers; our ministers would all be united in the same faith; our churches would walk together in love; and peace and love would reign through all our towns; and no people under heaven would be happier than we. And let me add,

4. It is the duty of all, especially of those in places of public trust, to do all in their power to promote a universal reformation.

It is the duty of each and every one of us to be religious ourselves, to repent and be converted, to give up ourselves to God through Jesus Christ, and live in the daily exercise of every divine virtue and christian grace, and in the practice of all social duties as the servants of God. This is our duty previous to a consideration of our temporal interest. For God is worthy of supreme love and universal obedience, as he is by nature God. And he has an original entire right to us, as he is our Creator. And if we bring the work of our re-

demption into the account, and the eternal rewards of heaven, we are bound, we are under infinite obligations, not only in duty, but in gratitude and interest, to love God and live to him, and do all we can to promote his honour, and the interests of his Son's kingdom in the world. And all this previous to any earthly consideration. Yea, all this, although we were so circumstanced, as that we might lose our lives for the profession and practice of christianity. But when to all this we add, that we in this colony are in fact in such circumstances, that it would be every way for our present interest to become strictly religious, that it is the readiest and directest way to become a happy people, yea, the only sure and certain way, this still further obliges us. And to go on in our sins, under these circumstances, is not only to despise God and the Redeemer, and the eternal joys of heaven, but to be even stupid to our own present interest and happiness in this world. Besides,

Those who are in public trust, are not only under all these obligations to be religious themselves; but they are also under peculiar obligations to do all they can to promote a universal reformation in others. And suffer me here to state and urge these obligations in an address to our rulers and teachers. And,

First. To our rulers. May it please your honours, and you, gentlemen REPRESENTATIVES, to you it belongs to lead the way, and it is your indispensable duty to do all that lies in your power, in your several places and capacities, to bring about a universal reformation among us, and so make us a happy people. You owe this duty to God, who has in the course of his providence done you this honour, to constitute you our rulers. He is the Father of your spirits, he formed your minds, he qualified you for government, and has distinguished you from your brethren and neighbours, and raised you up to rule over us. He has committed this people to your care, and made them your children, and he has given you wisdom, and put the sword in your hands, and you are sworn to be faithful: and God is your witness, and will be your judge at that day, when, divested of your present offices, you appear before the bar of Christ to receive your final sen-

tence, in the presence of the assembled universe. And if you are unfaithful, you never can answer it to the almighty; but will stand at his bar as self-condemned, as you have some times seen guilty criminals stand at yours.

His honour the governor, by and with your advice and desire, has lately sent his MAJESTY's proclamation through the colony, and ordered it to be read *twice* every year in all our congregations. It may therefore be considered as your joint act. And therein you "earnestly and strictly require all persons within this government, of every character, rank, and degree, to exert themselves in the practice and encouragement of piety and virtue, in preventing and punishing vice, profaneness, and immorality. And you command and enjoin judges, justices, and other magistrates, and all informing officers, that they be vigilant and strict in causing the laws for promoting religion, virtue, and good manners, to be duly observed, and in the discovery, prosecution, and punishment of all persons who shall be guilty of the breach of the laws made for preventing and punishing profane, vicious, dissolute, and immoral practices. And you exhort all his majesty's good subjects in this colony, to contribute all in their power, both by example and influence, toward a general reformation of manners, seriously considering their indispensable duty therein, and the awful consequences of a neglect thereof."—And now, gentlemen, you may remember the words of the Lord to his people of old, *they have well said all that they have spoken. O that there were such an heart in them!* (*Deut.* v. 28, 29.) It is easier, you are sensible, to issue out such a proclamation, than it is to act up to the true purport and spirit of it. "Dismal is the remark," says a late writer in England, "that no country has more or better laws to curb these vices than we have, but yet no country is so corrupted with drunkenness and idleness as England is at present, consuming all orders of people." And he adds, "one can scarce number all the excellent laws made from queen Elizabeth's time to this hour, against drunkenness, swearing, idle and dissolute persons, and all vice in general: but such is the gross neglect of them, as if they had not been enacted." Thus far this writer*. O never let it be

* See *London Magazine*, for 1760, p. 423.

said of us, according to the ancient proverb mentioned by the prophet Ezekiel, *as is the mother so is the daughter.* Remember, gentlemen, the words of the Lord to good old *Eli,* who, when he heard of the wickedness of his sons, did something equivalent to the issuing out of a proclamation to put laws in execution, without an actual reducing the proclamation into practice. He called them to an account, and said unto them, *Why do ye these things? For I hear of your evil doings by all this people. Nay, my sons, for it is no good report that I hear.* But was this enough in the eyes of God? No. Hear what God says: *I will judge the house of Eli for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth: because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.* (1 *Sam.* ii. 23, 24. iii. 13.) And, gentlemen, is not all the power in the colony virtually in your hands? Have you not as much power to restrain immoralities in any of us, as *Eli* had to restrain his sons? Have not we chosen you to be our fathers, and called ourselves your children, and put ourselves voluntarily under your authority? And if you should take your sword in hand, and go thoroughly to work to suppress drunkenness, idleness, and all kinds of debauchery, heaven and earth will be on your side. None but the vilest of the people will raise a clamour. And shall their clamour intimidate you? God forbid! Wherefore, as the people said to *Joshua* when about to extirpate the wicked Canaanites, *Only the Lord thy God be with thee as he was with Moses. Whosoever he be that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death: only be strong and of a good courage.* So I say unto you, in the behalf of all sober well-minded people in *Connecticut,* "Gentlemen, the Lord be with you in your attempts to suppress vice and immorality. And let that man be severely punished that shall dare to resist you. Only be strong and of a good courage." And pray, gentlemen, as you have leisure at this interview, take opportunity to strengthen one another in this good work. Agree and combine together to carry his majesty's proclamation into execution. The sword is put into your hands for this very purpose. God commands you to be faithful. Your king calls upon you. Your oath obliges you.

God will be with you, and all good men will stand by you. And if you are indeed faithful in the sight of God in this, and in all your other duties, you will have the approbation of your own minds, living and dying, and the eternal rewards of heaven in the world to come. Which may God of his infinite mercy grant, through Christ!

Secondly. To the ministers of the gospel here present. Reverend fathers and brethren, when our rulers are making efforts to bring about a general reformation, how ought we to be affected? And what ought to be our conduct? Should not we be ready to look up to heaven and devoutly say, "Blessed be the almighty, who hath raised us up such a king, and hath put this thing into the hearts of our rulers: and now may the Lord confirm the heart of our king and of our rulers in this good work?" And in the mean time our whole conduct should declare to our rulers and to the world, that we are with them in this thing. His honour, our governor, in his proclamation, has "recommended it to us, to inculcate upon our hearers the importance of this great and good work, and to assist, by our public ministry and private counsel and advice, in promoting the same." And now what shall we say to our great Master at the day of judgment, if we should be cold and indifferent upon such an occasion as this, and when thus called upon? Our Saviour was zealous against all manner of wickedness at the risk of his life. His apostles and first ministers were of the same spirit; and in the midst of mighty opposition, went every where, preaching, that men should repent and turn to God. And shall we be lukewarm with these examples before us? And that when we have so many things to animate us from heaven and earth? God forbid. Wherefore let us upon this occasion afresh devote ourselves wholly to the work of the ministry, and be agreed and united to do our utmost to bring about a universal reformation.

And behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! And if we should all cordially unite in preaching up the true gospel of Jesus Christ, and in bearing testimony against error and wickedness of every kind; and if we should all be thoroughly engaged to maintain the *discipline* of Christ in his house, and to prevent the unquali-

fied from entering into the work of the ministry, and to strengthen the hands of our civil authority in suppressing vice; if rulers and teachers throughout the colony, should be united as one man to bring about a universal reformation, might we not hope for the divine blessing, and expect to see true religion yet prevail in our land; a land originally settled for religious purposes; a land under many singular obligations to be holy to the Lord? May God almighty give us such an heart, of his infinite mercy through Jesus Christ.

To conclude, with one word to the congregation in general. From all that has been said, the true source of all our woes in this colony may easily be discerned, and the only way for a cure—*Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people.*

And if we look back to the beginning of the world, the experience of all past ages serves to confirm us in these sentiments. How happy was man at first, when sin was a thing unknown; and had mankind remained in their primitive state of innocence and rectitude, in love to God and one another, misery had been for ever unknown, and this had been a happy world, near a-kin to heaven. Sin is the source of all that misery and ruin which has spread through this apostate race. It turned our first parents out of paradise, and subjected them and all their race to death. It brought down a flood on the old world, and fire and brimstone on Sodom, and all the plagues on Egypt. It caused the carcasses of six hundred thousand Israelites to fall in the wilderness, and was the source of all the judgments which came on God's peculiar people in the days of their judges and of their kings. It laid a foundation for their Babylonish captivity, and afterwards for their destruction by the Romans. Meanwhile, it has spread misery and ruin among all other nations upon the face of the whole earth, from age to age. And this dreadful monster, this first-born of satan, this universal destroyer, which we call *sin*, has entered into this colony! nay, has entered into our hearts, and is the source of all our calamities, civil, ecclesiastical, and domestic. And shall we hug the viper in our bosoms, and caress the source of all our woes! God forbid. Rather, having found out the hateful monster, let us with a holy indigna-

tion bring it out before the Lord, and treat it as *Samuel* did *Agag*. This is the *Achan*, this is the troubler of our Israel; wherefore by a universal agreement let it be doomed to death. And while our rulers and our teachers arm themselves against it, let every man in the colony join to stone it with stones, till it is dead. So let sin be slain. Pride, luxuriousness, contentiousness, malice, envy, idleness, dishonesty, or by whatever other name it is called, *it is sin*, and let it die; and let righteousness come and reign in its stead. And then shall we become a glorious and happy people, and our shame shall be wiped away. O who shall deliver us from this odious, dreadful monster! Behold the great Messiah is appointed to bruise the serpent's head, and is now exalted at his Father's right hand to give repentance and remission of sins. Therefore in his name let us look up to God, and cry mightily for deliverance. And may heaven hear our cry, and send us help, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.